5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

595 585 quent marriages, if the man had proved a good, kind husband to his first wife, other men, who thought a good deal of their daughters, might propose to give them to him, so that they would be well treated. The man sent over the horses to the new father-in-law's lodge, and the girl returned to his, bringing her things with her. Or if the man saw a girl he liked, he would propose for her to her father.

834 [584] [171] Among the Blackfeet, there was apparently no form of courtship, such as prevails among our southern Indians. Young men seldom spoke to young girls who were not relations, and the girls were carefully guarded. They never went out of the lodge after dark, and never went out during the day, except with the mother or some other old woman.

584 [593] [762] The girl, therefore, had very little choice in the selection of a husband. If a girl was told she must marry a certain man, she had to obey. She might cry, but her father's will was law, and she might be beaten or even killed by him, if she did not do as she was ordered. As a consequence of this severity, suicide was quite common among the Blackfoot girls. A girl ordered to marry a man whom she did not like would often watch her chance, and go out in the brush and hang herself. The girl who could not marry the man she wanted to was likely to do the same thing.

593 [684] [759] The man had absolute power over his wife. Her life was in his hands, and if he had made a payment for her, he could do with her about as he pleased. On the whole, however, women who behaved themselves were well treated and received a good deal of consideration. Those who were light-headed, or foolish, or obstinate and stubborn were sometimes badly beaten. Those who were unfaithful to their husbands usually had their noses or ears, or both, cut off for the first offence, and were killed either by the husband or some relation, or by the *I-kun-uh'-kah-tsi* for the second. Many of the doctors of the highest reputation in the tribe were women.

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
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It is a common belief among some of those who have investigated the subject that the wife in Indian marriage was actually purchased, and became the absolute property of her husband. Though I have a great respect for some of the opinions which have been expressed on this subject, I am obliged to take an entirely different view of the matter. I have talked this subject over many times with young men and old men of a number of tribes, and I cannot learn from them, or in any other way, that in primitive times the woman was purchased from her father. The husband did not have property rights in his wife. She was not a chattel that he could trade away. He had all personal rights, could beat his wife, or, for cause, kill her, but he could not sell her to another man.

All the younger sisters of a man's wife were regarded as his potential wives. If he was not disposed to marry them, they could not be disposed of to any other man without his consent.

Not infrequently, a man having a marriageable daughter formally gave her to some young man who had proved himself brave in war, successful in taking horses, and, above all, of a generous disposition. This was most often done by men who had no sons to support them in their old age.

It is said that in the old days, before they had horses, young men did not expect to marry until they had almost reached middle life, — from thirty-five to forty years of age. This statement is made by Wolf Calf, who is now very old, almost one hundred years, he believes, and can remember back nearly or quite to the time when the Blackfeet obtained their first horses. In those days, young women did not marry until they were grown up, while of late years fathers not infrequently sell their daughters as wives when they are only children.

The first woman a man marries is called his sits-beside-him wife. She is invested with authority over all the other

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
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595 [554] wives, and does little except to direct the others in their work, and look after the comfort of her husband. Her place in the lodge is on his right-hand side, while the others have their places or seats near the door-way. This wife is even allowed at informal gatherings to take a whiff at the pipe, as it is passed around the circle, and to participate in the conversation.

595 556 178 In the old days, it was a very poor man who did not have three wives. Many had six, eight, and some more than a dozen. I have heard of one who had sixteen. In those times, provided a man had a good-sized band of horses, the more wives he had, the richer he was. He could always find young men to hunt for him, if he furnished the mounts, and, of course, the more wives he had, the more robes and furs they would tan for him.

586 If, for any cause, a man wished to divorce himself from a woman, he had but to send her back to her parents and demand the price paid for her, and the matter was accomplished. The woman was then free to marry again, provided her parents were willing.

587 428 When a man dies, his wives become the potential wives of his oldest brother. Unless, during his life, he has given them outright horses and other property, at his death they are entitled to none of his possessions. If he has sons, the property is divided among them, except a few horses, which are given to his brothers. If he has no sons, all the property goes to his brothers, and if there are no brothers, it goes to the nearest male relatives on the father's side.

567 562 593 The Blackfeet cannot be said to have been slave-holders. It is true that the Crees call the Blackfeet women "Little Slaves." But this, as elsewhere suggested, may refer to the region whence they originally came, though it is often explained that it is on account of the manner in which the Blackfeet treat their women, killing them or mutilating their features for adultery and other serious offences.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

the relative strengths of the warlike tribes in whose country they lived and worked. Probably the most reliable early estimate of Blackfoot numbers was compiled by Henry in 1809. It is a round number estimate of lodges and warriors. I have added the last column, arrived at by allowing an average of eight persons per lodge:

Tribe	*Lodges*	*Warriors*	*Persons*
Piegan	350	700	2,800
Blackfoot	200	520	1,600
Blood	100	200	800
	650	1,420	5,200

At that time the Blackfoot tribes were "increasing fast."[37] The Piegans were thought to have more than doubled their numbers in the three decades after the terrible smallpox epidemic. Male births outnumbered female ones, but adult women exceeded the number of men by a ratio of about five to three. Losses of men in warfare and hunting accidents created this disproportion between the sexes. The practice of polygamy helped to correct the situation. Husbands of more than one wife commonly married sisters. A widow could find a home as the wife of a friend of her deceased husband. Until a woman was nearly fifty years of age she was sure to find a husband. Some prominent chiefs had three to seven wives and many children. Kootenae Appe, the Piegan war chief, had twenty-two sons and four daughters by his five wives.[38]

Blackfoot men were described as tall, well proportioned, and muscular, with manly features and intelligent countenances. Their eyes were large, black, and piercing, their noses full and straight, their teeth white and regular, and their hair long, straight, and black. They plucked the hair from their faces to keep them smooth. The women were known for their good fea-

[37] Henry and Thompson, *New Light*, II, 530.

[38] Thompson, *Narrative*, 347–52.

[ca. 1850] CAMP LIFE

to Bear Chief when she was no more than seven. She married him when she was about seventeen. Some girls married before the age of twelve, but many reached their middle teens before they took this serious step. Few young men married before the age of twenty-one.

It was considered a family disgrace for an unmarried girl to become pregnant. The girl alone was held responsible for her actions. It was something of a disgrace to the families of both boy and girl if they eloped. The socially approved marriage was an important family function. It was arranged by a close friend or a relative of the boy with the girl's father or elder brother. Marriage was simply solemnized by an exchange of gifts between the families of the bride and groom. The first gifts could be offered by either the bride's or the groom's folks. Horses always were the most prized gift. One or more horses were invariably given, along with robes or blankets and household goods of lesser value. Relatives commonly chipped in to make the marriage gifts as imposing as possible. It was expected that the gifts returned by the spouse's family should be more lavish than those they had received. The bride went to live with her husband in a separate lodge or that of his family.

My elderly informants were very careful to remind me that white men who claimed the Blackfeet used to purchase their wives were misinformed. They stressed the importance of the exchange of gifts in the old-time Blackfoot marriage ceremony.

After marriage it was improper for the husband to speak directly to his mother-in-law. But his ties with the male members of his wife's family generally became very strong. He commonly gave horses to his elder brother-in-law after his return from a successful horse raid. He sometimes gave him choice buffalo meat after a hunt.

Polygamy was common among the Blackfeet because it was a practical means of caring for the excess of women created by heavy war losses. Women outnumbered men by two or three to one. Possession of several wives was one of the distinguishing marks of the successful man. A few of the leading chiefs had ten

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

595 or more wives. Probably more than half of the men had at least two. In these polygamous households the husband's favorite, his "sits-beside-me-wife," accompanied him to feasts and ceremonies and supervised the work of the other women in her husband's home. Cautious men tried to minimize the dangers of jealousy and friction at home by marrying sisters. A husband of an eldest sister could expect the younger ones to be offered to him as they reached marriageable age, although he did not have to accept them. Double-Victory-Calf-Robe had two elder sisters, both of them married to Iron Horn. One day her father said to her, "My son-in-law, Iron Horn, is very kind and good to us. You had better marry him and be with your sisters." Her family outfitted a travois, helped her mount the travois horse, and she rode over to Iron Horn's lodge. He accepted her as his third wife and gave horses to her father.

593 Men were the undisputed lords of their households. They expected their wives to wait upon them hand and foot, to bring them food when they wanted it, to light their pipes and remove their moccasins. Some men beat their wives unmercifully with
586 their riding whips. If a wife found her husband's cruelty unbearable, her elder brother would take her back to her family. Any man who tired of his wife could send her back to her family. In either case the wife took her property with her and the marriage was dissolved.

837 An errant husband could bestow his favors where he wished, but an unfaithful wife, if found out, was in for real trouble. Even
627 though her husband might forgive her, he knew he could not
684 retain the respect of other men unless he took revenge upon her lover, either by killing him or taking his horses, weapons, and other valuables. More often the husband wreaked his vengeance upon his wife. If he was a member of a men's society, his fellow members helped him to shame her. They dragged her from his lodge out on to the plains at night and attacked her. Then they or her jealous husband cut off the end of her nose to mark her for the rest of her life as an unfaithful wife. In 1833, Maximilian observed that women with clipped noses were common in the

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

484 move was to be made so that everyone would be in readiness to make an
619 early start the next morning.[69]
[203] In planning the movement of a Blackfoot band, the band chief consulted other prominent men of the band before announcing the move. He called upon certain individuals in the band to act as scouts, side, and rear guards.

484 Among the Blackfoot the medicine pipe owner played an important
791 role in camp movement. In dismantling his lodge on the morning of the move he placed his bundle at some distance from it if the move was to be a long one; he left it standing on its tripod near the lodge if the move was to be a short one. He took pains to point his pipe in
[782] the direction the camp was to go. Before he set out, the medicine pipe owner made a smudge and prayed for the safe journey of the camp, that no accident would befall any member and that no enemies would be encountered en route. The medicine pipe man led the main body when camp moved.[70]

PACKING UP

484 Experience made the Blackfoot efficient in packing their belongings quickly on the morning camp was to move. Except for the lodge and bedding most items were packed ready for transportation before the morning of the move. They needed only to be tied in their proper places on horses or travois. This greatly expedited last-minute preparations. J. M. Stanley (1855, p. 448), who accompanied Low Horn's Piegan village of 90 lodges on its move southward to Fort Benton in the fall of 1853, wrote that "in less than an hour the whole camp was under way".[71]

[462] As among other Plains Indian tribes Blackfoot packing of lodges
599 and furnishings was women's work. In a household of several wives
[545] the husband's favorite wife served as job foreman, supervising the work of the other wives, the aged women, and grown girls of the

[69] Larocque's description of movements of the entire Crow camp in the summer of 1805, reveals that Crow custom was similar to that described by living Blackfoot informants, at that early date. He observed that the principal chief consulted the other chiefs before deciding upon a move, then issued the order. That chief's lodge was the first to be taken down on the morning of the move (Larocque, 1910). Tixier (1940, p. 179) noted that heralds announced breaking of camp the night before the Osage hunting camp made a move during the summer of 1840. As early as 1776, the elder Henry (1809, p. 310) observed the Assiniboin chief's practice of notifying the camp of the next day's march in advance. My Kiowa informants stated that in that tribe the principal chief's decision was made known to tribal members through his announcer the night before camp movement, and that this chief led the procession when camp was under way.

[171] [70] Perhaps the Mandan and Hidatsa had a very similar custom. Alexander Henry (1897, vol. 1, p. 369), who accompanied these tribes on a visit to the Cheyenne in 1806, observed that Le Borgne's "grand pipe of ceremony" was carried at the head of the procession. Boller (1868, p. 277) noted that Poor Wolf "carried the pipe" and led the line of march when the Mandan-Hidatsa moved camp ca. 1860.

[171] [71] Denig (1953, p. 36) credited the Crow with being able to pack and start on the march in "less than 20 minutes."

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

household engaged in the task. Each family was responsible for its own belongings. Every article had its assigned place and means of transportation.

PACKING THE LODGE

The lodge was the bulkiest, heaviest, and most complex possession transported by the Blackfoot in moving camp. A century ago Denig (1930, p. 578) wrote that among the Upper Missouri tribes the size of the lodge was determined "by the number of persons to be accommodated or their means of transporting it." Two decades later Bradley (1923, p. 258) stated that Blackfoot lodge size varied according to the size "desired or the wealth of the occupants." Informants claimed the latter factor was of primary importance, for the larger the lodge the greater were the number of skins required for construction of its cover and the number, length, and basal thickness of the lodge poles necessary for its foundation. Consequently the larger the lodge, the greater the number of horses required to transport it.

Before the skin cover was replaced by the canvas one during the period 1870–85, Blackfoot lodges were sized according to the number of buffalo cowskins employed in the construction of the cover. The smallest lodge had 6 skins, the largest about 40 skins. Alexander Culbertson (in 1848) saw a lodge of 40 skins owned by the Blood chief, Seen-from-Afar, a wealthy owner of 100 horses and husband of 10 wives (Bradley, 1900, p. 258). None of my informants claimed to have seen a lodge larger than 30 skins. Weasel Tail said the average Blackfoot lodge numbered 12 to 14 skins, figures also cited by Wissler (1910, p. 100). A lodge of that size was 14 to 16 feet in diameter at the base and provided sleeping accommodations for a family of 8, with their baggage.

Informants said that skin lodges had less lodgepoles in proportion to their size than the more recent canvas lodges. Weasel Tail said 19 poles were used for support of a 14-skin lodge (4 main poles, 5 secondary ones on each side, 2 near the door, 1 at the center of the back, and 2 ear-support poles). Modern Blackfoot who set up canvas-covered lodges in their Sun Dance encampments take pride in the length of their lodgepoles. In many lodges the poles extend 4 or more feet above the crossing. They criticize shorter poles, saying they look "like a crop-eared horse." However, in buffalo days only the wealthy could afford the extravagance of poles much longer than were needed to support their covers.[72]

Wealthy families among the Blackfoot made new lodges every summer, before the Sun Dance encampment. Cowskins collected during

[72] Palliser (1863, p. 138) observed that Blackfoot lodges generally were larger and better furnished than those of the Cree, a tribe poor in horses. On the other hand, the horse-wealthy Crow tribe was renowned for having the finest lodges among the Upper Missouri tribes in buffalo days (Catlin, 1841, vol. 1, pp. 43–44; Lowie, 1922 a, pp. 222–228).

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

ber of the attacking force acted on his own. Men who had the greatest confidence in the protective powers of their war medicines led the attack. Losses in these assaults were heavy considering the small numbers of men engaged. Sometimes the attacking force managed to storm the fortification and wipe out the defenders, but not without considerable loss to their own party.

INFLUENCE OF WARFARE ON BLACKFOOT POPULATION

Throughout the historic period prior to 1885, warfare caused a heavy drain on Blackfoot population. Although the numbers killed in single actions usually were small, the ratio of losses to tribal populations was high compared with the ratios between casualties in modern warfare and national populations. There must have been a number of years in which more than 1 percent of the total Piegan population died in battles large and small.

The demonstrable effect of war losses was to unbalance the proportions between the sexes. David Thompson (1916, p. 352) noted of the Piegan ca. 1800, "The grown up population of these people appear to be about three men to every five women, and yet the births appear in favour of the boys." In 1847, Father Point reckoned the women in the Blackfoot tribes outnumbered the men two or three to one, and attributed this disproportion to war losses (De Smet, 1905, vol. 3, p. 952). Eleven years later Agent Vaughan estimated 2,060 men and 3,100 women in the four Blackfoot tribes (including the Gros Ventres). He attributed this disproportion between the sexes to losses of men in war and hunting accidents, and added, "This difference in the number of the male and the female doubtless suggested and sustained the prevailing custom of polygamy among them, many of the men having more wives than one, the number reaching to five or more, according to the caprice or wealth of the man" (U. S. Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1858, pp. 432–433). Thus warfare, which was to a large extent initiated and perpetuated through raiding for horses, influenced both population trends and family organization among the Blackfoot.[58]

WAR HONORS

In the 1870's, Lieutenant Bradley wrote of the Blackfoot:

> The various exploits of war are denominated coups and reflect honor upon their performers according to a certain fixed scale of merit. To capture an enemy's arms is a coup of the first class; to touch him alive, of the second; to touch his dead body or secure his scalp, of the third; to make a successful theft of an enemy's horses, of the fourth. [Bradley, 1923, p. 267.]

[58] Population losses due to warfare were proportionately greater among some of the enemies of the powerful and aggressive Blackfoot. The small Flathead tribe was greatly reduced by 1855 (Ewers, 1948 a, p. 23). The Crow, attacked by the more numerous Teton Dakota from the east as well as by the Blackfoot from the north, suffered such losses that fur traders who knew them feared the Crow would be exterminated (Denig, 1855, p. 71).

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

(1923, pp. 272–273) and Grinnell (1892, pp. 211–216). The initial proposal could be made by parents of either the young man or woman. In either case it was a matter of pride for the family receiving the first gifts to return gifts of greater value than those received. Horses were virtually always among the valuable gifts exchanged. Bradley (1923, p. 272) wrote that "two or three horses or their equivalent in other goods constitute the customary offering in cases of intended marriage." Green Grass Bull recalled one marriage in which the groom's folks received over 40 horses from the bride's relatives. Yet he said that he gave his wife's father only one horse when he married, although later, when he returned from horse raids, he presented horses to her father and her two brothers. Three Calf recalled a rare instance of a father's offer of his daughter to a young man in return for a certain horse that man owned which he coveted.[80]

POLYGAMY

In buffalo days the number of Blackfoot women far exceeded that of men due primarily to heavy male war losses. (See p. 212.) At the same time many hands were needed by successful hunters to prepare their robes and skins for the fur trade and to manage their households on the move and in camp. It was usual for wealthy men to have several wives. Men of the middle class, in many instances, were polygamous. Poor men generally were monogamous. There were notable exceptions to this rule. One Piegan was known to have possessed three wives and but one horse. He and his family had a very difficult time moving their few belongings. On the other hand, the wealthy Stingy had one wife. Many parents offered him their daughters, but he refused, saying that more than one wife meant trouble.

There seems to have been a common belief that the practice of the sororate reduced the possibilities of jealousy and friction in polygamous marriages. Double Victory Calf Robe, an aged Blood woman, told me she was a wife in a polygamous union. Her two older sisters were married to Iron Horn. One day her father told her, "My son-in-law is very good to us. You better marry him and be with your sisters." Her parents outfitted a horse and travois and she rode over to Iron Horn's lodge. He accepted her, and gave horses to her father. The exchange of gifts in this marriage of a third daughter to a son-

[80] Early references to the exchange of gifts, primarily of horses, in the marriage ceremonies of other Plains and Plateau tribes appear in the literature. Lewis and Clark noted this procedure among the Lemhi Shoshoni in 1805 (Coues, 1893, vol. 2, p. 557). Say reported gift exchanges in the Kansas marriage ceremony in 1819 (James, 1823, vol. 1, pp. 123–124); and Maximilian found them customary among the Mandan in 1834 (Maximilian, 1906, vol. 23, pp. 279–280).

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

in-law followed the procedure customary in monogamous or first marriages among the Blackfoot.[51]

THE HORSE IN PUNISHMENT OF CIVIL AND CRIMINAL OFFENSES

Bradley (1870's) reported that with the exception of punishments meted out by the police for disobedience of the restriction against premature hunting of the buffalo by individuals—

> all crimes of whatever grade were purely private wrongs for which the Blackfoot code provided no penalty but such as the injured party, himself, or his friends, was able to inflict. And if we accept as crimes only those offenses for which custom had in some degree regulated the penalty, we find ourselves reduced to a list of ridiculously small proportions, comprehending in fact only larceny, adultery, and homicide. There were other wrongs which the individual might sustain as assault and battery, or slander, but the injured party was left to inflict upon the offender such punishment as he chose or was able to inflict." [Bradley, 1923, pp. 286-287.]

Cases of larceny were generally settled by restoring to the owner the stolen goods, whether horses or other possessions (ibid., p. 287). In cases of homicide and adultery, the two major offenses against the individual, exaction of fines in horses was common. The relatives of a murdered man generally felt duty bound to revenge his death by killing the murderer. However, that might in turn lead to an extended blood feud between the families of the two dead men, resulting in a series of deaths on both sides. As an alternative the killer's relatives might be able to satisfy the family of the murdered man through payment of a heavy fine in horses and/or other valuables. Informants stated that this alternative was resorted to most commonly if the murderer was of a higher social status than the murdered man, or if the murderer was a member of a large family whose vengeance would surely fall upon his killers. Maximilian told of the resort to this alternative in a case involving the killing of a nephew of a Piegan chief by a Blood Indian in the summer of 1833. After some shots were exchanged between Piegan and Blood the murder was commuted through presents (Maximilian, 1906, vol. 23, p. 159). In 1838, traders at Fort Benton killed a troublesome Blood Indian who had threatened their lives. The Blood in council agreed that the case could be settled by presents of a horse to each of the dead man's brothers (Bradley, 1900, pp. 227-230).

At the Blackfeet Agency in Montana, Indian Agent John S. Wood, in council with the chiefs of the Blackfoot, Blood, and Piegan, adopted

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[51] Tixier's comment on the Osage, "Any man may marry as many wives as he can take care of," may be regarded as typical of Plains Indian tribes in general (Tixier, 1940, p. 188). Plural marriages probably were more common among wealthier tribes than in poorer ones. Of the wealthy Crow, prior to 1856, Denig (1953, p. 34) wrote, "About one half the nation have a plurality of wives, the rest one each." My Blackfoot data suggests the proportion of plural marriages was smaller among them.

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

It was not until the American Fur Co. established a post on the Missouri (1831) in Blackfoot country, and that company began to accept buffalo robes in trade, that the Blackfoot became important procurers of animal skins for the fur trade. Long before that time the Blackfoot had become experienced in the use of horses. Only through the use of horses for killing and transporting buffalo could the great number of robes supplied the traders by the Blackfoot in the period ca. 1835–80 have been obtained. Only through the exploitation of cheap and accessible land and water transportation could traders handle a sufficient volume of heavy, bulky, and relatively cheap buffalo hides to make trade in them profitable. The mountain men, who continued to collect the furs of smaller mammals and to transport them overland, made as extensive use of horses in their operations as did the Blackfoot, whom they tried to avoid.

Larpenteur's statement (p. 29, this bulletin) equating wealth in horses, polygamy, and extensive trade at the posts clearly shows the correlation between Indian wealth in horses (which permitted the killing of many buffalo), the polygamous union (which provided many female hands to dress robes and skins for market), and large-scale trade at the posts. It was the wealthy Indian who was the primary patron of the trading posts. Poor men had few robes to offer.

The fur trade furnished to the Indians new materials for use in their manufactures, arts, and crafts. Their use of horses influenced the form and function of many of the items made from these new materials. Metal knives obtained in trade greatly facilitated the manufacture of articles of rawhide. But these articles were primarily saddles, harness, and transport luggage especially designed for use in moving camp with horses. The fur trade supplied glass beads, cloth, metal, and shell for use in making and decorating articles of clothing, as well as horse gear. Yet in designing these articles the Indians were mindful of the enhancement of their appearance on horseback. Generally it was the wealthy family that possessed the most elaborately decorated costumes and riding and transport gear. Those who owned no horses had none of them.

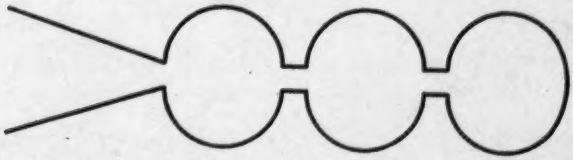
Both the horse and the gun influenced Indian warfare, encouraging the abandonment of fighting in closely grouped, static lines, in favor of mobile, spread formations. Both horse and gun encouraged the abandonment of heavy, rawhide body armor which impeded physical movement without providing adequate protection from gunfire. When first employed by the Blackfoot against enemies unfamiliar with the use of firearms, the muzzle-loading flintlock created a panic among their opponents out of all proportion to its true effectiveness as a fire weapon (Thompson, 1916, pp. 330–332). But in later years, after both the Blackfoot and their neighbors were armed, the muzzle-

10: Lewis E-4 (no date) 1973 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

only the poorest households which were without their guns, iron axes, kettles, beads, awls, blankets, etc.

Changes in Material Culture

The enlargement of the buffalo corrals and the increase in the size of tipis were a direct result of the fur trade. In order to supply the traders with more buffalo hides the Blackfoot enlarged the corrals and pounds by adding appendages in the following manner:[186]



It is possible to discern an increase in the size of tipis at two points in Blackfoot history. The first occurred a short time after the introduction of the horse. While we have no description of Blackfoot tipis in pre-horse days we can infer the limits of their size from the fact that the maximum load that could be carried by the dog travois was between 40 to 50 pounds. Since the weight of a buffalo hide was well over 50 pounds, a six to eight skin tipi would probably tax their transportation facilities to the limit. Such a tipi could accommodate between six to eight persons. However, in the earliest reference to Blackfoot tipis found in Henday (1754) or about twenty years after their acquisition of horses, Henday writes that the "leaders" tent in a camp of two hundred was "large enough to contain 50 persons."[188] From this we can infer that the size of tipis had increased to a point that would have been impossible without the improved means of transportation supplied by the horse. I think we can assume that the tipi mentioned by Henday represented the maximum size for this period and were constructed only by well-to-do chiefs.

A further increase in the size of tipis occurred in the 1830's and was related to the expansion of the fur trade and the growth of polygyny among the Blackfoot. The average tipi was made of from six to twelve skins and accommodated from six to ten people. However, in the case of wealthy

[186] J. Richardson, Blackfoot Field Notes, Mss.
[188] Henday, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

10: Lewis E-4 (no date) 1973 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

of buffalo. The horse became an invaluable aid in scouting and allowed entire bands to follow the movements of the herds. In addition the horse was used as a pack animal. Formerly, when hunting parties went on foot they were limited in the amount of meat they could carry back to camp. It was the practice to take only the best cuts and leave the remaining meat to decay. The horse made it possible to transport more meat and hides back to camp. The horse therefore insured a larger and more regular food supply, lessening the contrasts between periods of plenty and periods of scarcity. However, it was the fur trade which allowed the Blackfoot to utilize the productive capacities of the horse to the full, for we have seen that the fur trade provided a market for dried provisions, buffalo hides and horses.

Marriage

It is well to recall that over 20,000 robes were annually gathered at Fort Benton. Since the Blackfoot, and especially the Piegan, were the principal traders at Fort Benton we can gauge the effects of this trade upon their lives. The increased burden of preparing provisions and tanning put new demands upon female labor and increased the economic importance of women. Polygyny grew to an extent unprecedented for the Plains.

From the journals of those who visited the Blackfoot at various intervals in the history of the fur trade we can piece together a picture of this growth of polygyny. In 1787 Thompson observed that three or four wives were not uncommon and that the greatest number any man had was six.[118] From his account we conclude that most men had only one or two wives. When Thompson returned in 1800 he reported no change. Alexander Henry, the younger, who was with the Blackfoot in 1810, reported six or seven wives as the greatest number.[119] Maximilian writing in the 1830's mentions eight wives in the case of wealthy chiefs.[120] Unfortunately, there is a great gap in the historical information on this subject until about 1870. However, tracing back to 1840 a number of genealogies gathered from informants, we have found further evidence for this steady increase of wives. Grinnell, writing of approximately the same period (1840) stated, "... it was a very poor man who did not have three wives. Many had six, eight, and some even more than a dozen; I have heard of one who had sixteen."[121] Denny, a captain in the first contingent of the Northwest Mounted Police in 1874, and later an Indian agent for the Blackfoot, wrote, "I have known Blackfoot with as many as twenty or even thirty women so acquired (by pur-

[118] Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 347.
[119] Henry, *op. cit.*, p. 526.
[120] Thwaites, *op. cit.*, p. 110.
[121] G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, p. 218.

10: Lewis E-4 (no date) 1973 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

chase)."[125] These numbers appear to be extreme but they are borne out by information recently gathered in the field by the writer. One informant told of her great-grandfather, Chief Many Horses, who had twenty wives. This was in about 1855. Our material therefore suggests that the sharpest spurt in the increase in wives occurred after 1833, a period which coincides with the increase in the buffalo hide trade both in Canada and The United States.[126]

The possession of a large number of wives was a source of wealth and was therefore cherished by the Blackfoot. The missionaries learned this when they attempted to suppress polygyny. Said a Blackfoot chief,

> "Tell the priest . . . that if he wishes to do anything with my people he must no longer order them to put away their wives. I have eight all of whom I love, and all have children by me—Which am I to keep and which to put away? . . ."

The traveler, the Earl of Southesk continues,

> "This chief however injured the moral force of his remarks by going on to say that his eight wives could dress a hundred and fifty skins in the year whereas a single wife could only dress ten, supposing that she was always well, and that such a loss was not to be thought of."[128]

Since wives had to be paid for in horses we must briefly consider the relation of this expansion in polygyny to the accumulation of horses and the growth of herding. We know that the Blackfoot first obtained their horses from the Shoshone in 1730. When Henday visited the Piegan in 1754 he described them as mounted but makes no mention of herds.[129] The same applies to Cocking's description of the Blackfoot in 1774.[130] In 1787 Thompson describes Blackfoot horses and though he does not specifically mention herding he states that he saw a group of thirty horses and a dozen mules at the camp at which he was staying.[127] In 1800 Thompson was again with the Blackfoot but he recorded nothing new on this matter. But in 1808 Alexander Henry, the younger, writes, ". . . some of the Blackfoot own forty to fifty horses. But the Piegan have by far the greatest numbers. I heard of one man who owns three hundred . . . ."[131] By 1833 we find that Maximilian reports as many as 4000 and 5000 horses owned by one wealthy

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[125] Sir Cecil Denny, *The Law Marches West*, p. 51.

[126] There was a great disproportion in the sex ratio due to the increased casualties in warfare. In 1847 Father Point estimated that between two thirds and three quarters of the adult population were women. See DeSmet, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p. 952.

[128] Earl of Southesk, *Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains*, p. 155.

[129] Henday, *op. cit.*, pp. 337-338.

[130] Cocking, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

[127] Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 371.

[131] Henry and Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

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Piegan chief.[119] Although this evidence is scanty it certainly is suggestive of an increase in the size of herds. What is most significant for our purposes is that by 1833, the time when the large markets for tanned robes in the States first developed, there already existed an accumulation of horses that made possible the ensuing expansion of polygyny. This expansion in turn perpetuated and intensified the social gradations that already existed, for men with large herds were the ones who could purchase many wives, and in the exchange thereby transform idle capital (surplus horses) into productive capital (women).

Following the growth of polygyny and the increasing importance of the bride price in horses we find that the age at which marriages occurred was also altered. There was a tendency for girls to marry at a younger age and for men to marry at a later age. In 1787 Thompson reported that girls usually married between sixteen and eighteen, and men at twenty-two or somewhat later.[120] In 1885, Rev. Wilson's informants told him that girls normally married at twelve.[121] Our own informants, speaking of the period of the latter half of the nineteenth century, placed the age of marriage for girls between ten and sixteen and that of men at thirty-five, rarely at less. It is during this period that we get the first cases of child marriage. Fathers now wished to marry off their daughters as early as possible in order to realize the bride price. On the other hand, men were not chosen as sons-in-law until they had accumulated sufficient property and had acquired a good reputation as a warrior or hunter.

The increase in the number of wives brought greater friction within the household. The effect of the sororate in eliminating hostilities diminished and at the same time the contrasts between the status of upper and lower wives were intensified. The native term for a wife lower than third or fourth means slave wife, which accurately describes their status. Lower wives performed the most difficult tasks, rarely put up Sun Dances, were most often beaten and most often suspected of adultery.

Social Organization

The fur trade stimulated inter-tribal intercourse. Tribes which had little contact with each other met at trading posts with the result of much borrowing and spreading of culture elements. A case in point is the borrowing of age grade societies by the Blackfoot from some of the village tribes to the south.

The historical material offers little in the way of positive evidence for the

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[119] Thwaites, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[120] Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

[121] Wilson, *Report of the Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the British Assoc. for the Adv. of Science*, Sept. 1885, p. 192.

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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than we had intended to stay, and my father, knowing what would happen when we went away, would make it hard for us to go. 581 184

It is not surprising that a marriage of this kind, with the children maneuvering to remain in their respective privileged homes, and the fathers maneuvering for even the limited *minípoka* help, did not last long. This one broke up in a year and a half. 586 184

When the favorites remarried, pomp, ceremony and property exchange were usually omitted, as they were in second marriages throughout the tribe. Free from the pressure of parents, a man might select a wife from any stratum of society. Passion rather than property dictated the new choice. 587 184

The growing concentration of horse wealth made an unstable marriage situation even more precarious. Young men had great difficulty in obtaining a wife at all, for they could neither pay for nor support one. Such difficulty was not unknown in the older Blood society despite the excess of women over men. The established hunters and warriors (i.e., men who had horses or their equivalent in ceremonial prestige) had two, three, or more wives.[83] Fathers urged their young and attractive daughters, then as now, upon older and successful men. But while the time of marriage was late (many men were twenty-five and the sons of the poor frequently over thirty)[84] a young man still had some chance to rise on his own initiative and win recognition. In the early eighties, and for twenty years to follow, he suffered from all the old disadvantages of the polygamous society, and the new order offered him few satisfactory ways of exhibiting his worth. In 1882, it was reported, "there was very little crime. More trouble was caused by the stealing of women from each other. Women sold for horses. Only a few are rich enough to buy women now. Most of the young men who have no horses cannot get married, and therefore steal from someone rich in women."[85] 556 581 [162] [595] [582] [555] [674] [578]

Nevertheless, a few ways remained for making a living. A man might work out for whites or become a scout or farmer in the government service, or if he preferred to follow Indian custom, he could seek a vision and become a shaman, although remunerative practice did not immediately follow. Or he might, and here the rewards were quicker, improve his position by marrying a rich women, often some ten or fifteen years his senior. A sufficiently ambitious man might combine all of them. John Many Rattles did.[86] Born in 1862, he reached adulthood when it was most difficult for young men to rise. He hired out to whites, became a government scout at thirty-three, 556 [464] [557] 556 557 [464]

[83] Henry and Thompson, *Journals*, Vol. 2, p. 526, "Many of them have six or seven wives."

[84] Lewis, *The Effect of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture*, p. 40. Cf. also Bradley, *Characteristics*, p. 272.

[85] 1883, Vol. 4, No. 5, p. 176.

[86] Harry D. Biele, Field Notes, 1939.

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If the manly-hearted woman is regarded as a product of established and traditional wealth, "Miss Wells' girls" illustrate the possibility for mobility within the more recent society. Half-breeds, most of them, and without inherited property, these "girls," now in their late forties, were sent to school at an early age and only rarely spent their holidays with their Indian relatives. When other children returned to their parents, this unwanted group went off with their teacher to a summer camp where they worked and experimented in cooperative living. Miss Wells understood her girls. She mothered them and imbued them with enthusiasm for white ways. They, in turn, loved and respected her. Today these "girls" are the most progressive women of their generation—and the most ambitious. Several assisted at the school after "graduation." One earned her living as a dressmaker in a white community. Later she returned to become the first and only independent woman farmer on the reserve. It is to this group that the up-and-coming wheat farmers, mostly half-breeds themselves, have looked for wives. These farmers are now the "newly rich," and two of them have been elected band chiefs.

Many women enjoy independent earnings, but these have never been great enough to radically affect their social status. Now, as in the past, vertical mobility is achieved through advantageous marriage. Marriage, however, plays a lesser rôle in the life of the woman of wealth. A union with the son of a rich family naturally cements her position; but a union with a poor man does not, ipso facto, lower it. On the contrary, her property can be used to enhance his earning power and prestige. If he is industrious, both will gain; if he proves unsatisfactory, she can cast him off and with little difficulty find a more deserving mate. Few women, however, have much property. Most of them, despite the privileges they enjoy, shine in reflected glory in this dominantly masculine society. In childhood, their status depends upon their fathers' status, in adulthood, upon their husbands'. Significantly, and in contrast to feminist practice in the Pueblos, a Blood woman is always known after marriage by her husband's name.

JEALOUSY.—While this male dominance is indisputable, it gives small comfort to the man on the reserve, for jealousy is one of the most disruptive forces in Blood human relations. The woman is still considered a form of property, property that is as necessary to success today as it was in the polygamous past. Then the younger wives were known as "uncertain wives," and lapses in matrimonial duty received summary and harsh treatment. Writing in 1832, Maximilian comments, "They generally punish infidelity in their wives very severely, cutting off their noses in such cases. . . . When ten or twelve tents were together, we were sure to see six or seven women mutilated in this manner. . . . There have been frequent instances of a husband immediately killing his wife, when she had had intercourse with

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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at least two unions before she settled down with the youngest son of a wealthy chief. 593 837

But even a long interlude of adaptation may end in abandonment. A Bob Double Man still believes in loving and leaving; a Pointed Plume, after an alliance of twenty-two years, again sows his wild oats; a Henry Dennis deserts his wife and seven young children for a younger and handsomer woman; and a Mrs. John White Bull changes partners at will, returning unconcernedly to a cast-off husband when a new one proves unsatisfactory. 581

Many, however, stick it through; but within the frame of a monogamous marriage, they are able to reëstablish the polygamous past with considerable success. Not infrequently a woman, whose husband is safely behind prison bars for drunkenness or cattle stealing or assault, will spend the time of waiting with an "interested" and hospitable relative. Her position in his household is not unlike that of the "second wife" in an earlier day. She may, now as then, give needed domestic aid, but more often she remains a demanding and quarrelsome interloper fighting the "legal" wife for the husband's favor. 593 837 595 178 [578]

When a more stable relationship is sought without disturbing the formal bonds of marriage, a mistress's husband may also be invited into the home as farm worker or cattle hand. He watches his arrogant employer delight his wife with gifts and make love to her in drunken orgies. To him, dignified silence at these spectacles establishes his bravery; to them, he remains a weakling to be ignored and laughed at. 593 837 [577]

Most often, however, separation, either permanent or temporary, is the ready answer to incompatibility. From the standpoint of familial stability, the latter may well be the more devastating. One detailed description of alternating breaks and reunions follows: 586

In the four months that Pointed Plume was living with his "new wife" Laura and her baby daughter, they separated as many times. Twenty years his junior, small, compact, but looking his contemporary, she industriously prepared his meals, jerked the meat, made pemmican, preserved the fruits, and did the family washing. A neighbor said, "Pointed Plume's new wife is a good worker. She likes to please the old man. She does everything for him." But another commented, "They are not getting on very well. Laura's first marriage with Big Shield broke up because she was so jealous; her marriage with Tom Bacon broke up for the same reason. Now after three months she is accusing White Plume of running with other women. She even suspects him when he is paid to drive a man and his wife to town in his car." The neighbor spoke from intimate knowledge. After quarreling with her husband, Laura had been set down along the roadside. On reaching Cardston she rushed to the parked car, and shouted at her astonished neighbor who was sitting there alone, "Pointed Plume and your wife are sweet- 593 [586] [577] [586] [152] 593 586 152 578

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561 571 [602] iority, tempered, to be sure, by bonds of affection between members of a family, yet finally secure only in the company of one's equals, the comrades, who were for the most part outside the kin group.

Generation

561 602 601 593 561 [844] [595] 603 561 As seniority ordered the relations between males and to a lesser degree between females, the concept of generation was the more important one ordering the relations of Northern Blackfoot women to each other. With the exception of the sibling terms, which differentiate older and younger than ego, the basis for social relationships was fixed by generation. Three main types of relationship may be distinguished: (1) Mother-daughter relationships implied sacrifice by mother for daughter and obedience by daughter to mother's commands. A mother sent her daughter with a tipi made by her own hands to her first husband. She had also made moccasins for her future son-in-law and his parents. At the birth of her daughter's child, she was a prominent figure in helping at the delivery. (2) In the absence of a mother, the older sister fulfilled these obligations, but in general the relations of older to younger sister required more reciprocity than was the case with ego's relationship to her mother. Once the younger sister reached a position where she had means of repaying, she was expected to repay in various ways her older sister's kindness. Such cooperation was the ideal, and a Blackfoot argument for sororal polygyny held that blood sisters made a more harmonious household than unrelated co-wives. However, in practice the older sister often sat leisurely in command of her husband's household as the "sits-beside-him wife" while her younger sisters performed the arduous work in the tipi and cared for the children. (3) The relationship of grandmother to granddaughter was typically remote, somewhat reserved and distant as before all elderly people. Grandmothers, however, made a practice of befriending and maintaining warm, affectionate relations with one or more of their grandchildren. Thus nearly every child could count on warmth and devotion in at least one of the austere old women.

561 601 [178] These generations are conceptually arranged in two different ways. All women of a mother and daughter line arranged themselves in biological generation terms. In addition there is evidence for counting generation in a second way, which fixed the relationships to the lateral lines. After ego's marriage cross-cousins on the mother's side were all called "grandchildren." At this time also the wives of this line of mother's brothers were no longer called "mother" but "daughter-in-law." On the paternal side father's sister was called "grandmother." Our older informants state that the female descending line of this woman was also called "grandmother." Today, however, the descendants are called "older sister" or "younger sister." The term "grandmother" is, nevertheless, in keeping with the practice of calling

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of her ill-mannered ways she was accused of joking obscenely with a paternal cross-cousin who was nominally her grandmother. In another case a man was reciting a general formula for handling wives who had gone home from their husbands: "Then the husband would send his sister to the home of the wife's brothers to solicit in his behalf." If it be recalled that she along with her brother is elevated by siblings of the wife's family, then we can understand her power as mediator. In another instance a man married two women who were cross-cousins to each other; he was severely criticised for marrying wives who were "two generations apart."

We were struck by the differing ethos of the woman's world as compared with the man's. Confined in their activity largely to the camp, women were more complacent, resigned, physically less active, and less apt to engage in physical battle to settle their differences. This, we believe, was in part the result of the greater importance of kinship in fixing their social relations than was the case with men. First it was more difficult for women to alter their status in the social group than for men. War and wealth did not offer opportunities; rather the woman's position was dependent in this male-dominated society upon the status of her husband. The wife of a chief (*ni'na.ki*) might display her personal finery to the discredit of other women, but it was only as the wife of a chief that such conduct was possible. Otherwise she was a deviant who was treated accordingly. To be sure, women might raise their status in the social hierarchy through religious and ceremonial participation, but unlike coups in battle, the woman who vowed six Sun Dances was accorded very little, if any, more respect than one who vowed one or two Sun Dances. Though women took pride in good handwork, there was no widespread or standardised recognition of these accomplishments that we have uncovered, unlike the Cheyenne women who were admitted to a society in recognition for outstanding handwork.[1] Hence the kinship system appears to be more effective than was the case with men in channeling social relationships between women, for there were fewer competing factors to disrupt its efficient working.

Marriage: A Union between Female and Male Worlds

The male world was outside the tipi in the tending of horses, hunting and the counting of coups. There the world was ordered through seniority. Within the tipi it was a woman's world with objects made by the woman, with children to be tended, and with other women categorised in terms of generation who assisted her with her duties. Marriage was the institution that united these two worlds, but it presented a break with the life of the past for both partners.

[1] Grinnell, G. B. *The Cheyenne Indians*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1924, Vol. 1, p. 159 ff.

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
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These are in part reversions to former means of satisfying needs, i.e., gardening and hunting, forms of support found during the eighties after moving on to the reserve for the first time.

The picture of white settlers may also have acted as an incentive to surrender land. No Indian who rode the country turnpike and worked a few days at white farms could fail to see the relative advantages of white existence. The Blackfoot may not have known that these farmers were frequently gambling weather conditions against a considerable sum of money owed the railway company for their ready-made farms and that it was a tight squeeze to make these payments. However, in material goods the comparison was obvious. The whites had good clothing, well-furnished houses, barns with good horses and wagons. On Saturday they returned from the store in town, their buggies brimming with groceries. These whites were growing wheat, and when it was stated that the Indians too could grow wheat, if they sold the land, these tangible rewards seemed accessible for the first time.

Further vigour was given to this argument by reports from visitors to other reserves. The Blood Indians had ploughed their land and had been raising wheat since 1908, the North Piegans even earlier. One could readily see the wealth of these Indians. Besides, even the Crees, long despised by the Blackfoot, were farming and would soon be better off than their old enemy.

The realization that there was a case for farming is shown by a reported conversation between a chief and Markle:

> Once, before he was made a chief, the informant went to the Crees and Bloods and saw their farms. So he asked Mr. Markle if they couldn't have farms too. Markle: "You haven't enough money to farm with. The Crees sold land; Bloods sold longhorn cattle for money to start farms." Informant: "Then we'd better sell that land on the other side of the river for money to start farms." Markle: "You can't make that decision yourself. Consult the people and chiefs in a meeting, and see if they want to."

A frequently cited point of view emphasized the desirability of constant rations. Their curtailment was not a new thing, for in the past this device had been used as a means of enforcing conformity to the dicta of the agent. Markle in 1903 describes such an event during his incumbency as agent:

> It may be remembered that, in my last report, I expressed thankfulness that there had been no plural marriages during the preceding year. That report was

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657 barely out of my hand when I learned that three members of the band were
595 dissatisfied with one wife each and had taken another. I immediately directed that the rations of these families be withheld until such time as they saw fit to obey the rules in this respect. One family missed one ration, and then decided that it was better policy to abide by the rules. The other two families held out for several rations, and then they succumbed and put away wife No. 2. The rationing of able-bodied men and women had many objectionable features to me, but I must confess that, in these three instances, it gave a leverage to settle an objectionable custom, for the time being at least.[1]

657 It was hence natural that when the Indians suffered in 1908 a repe-
657 tition of the withdrawal of rations, they should search for the agent's objective. To compel the surrender of the land was the objective
432 that many ascribed. Under such circumstances, with poverty increasing and the stocks of food diminishing, only one answer came to them—to sell the land if that would mean getting rations. One informant expressed a typical view:

> The rations were cut. That is why Yellow Horse pitied the people. People thought that this was done to make them give up the land. They knew that as long as the land were not sold the rations would be cut off. At first there were more who did not want to sell and thought they could get rations anyway. Later, people for and against selling the land were about even.

432 For two years at the bi-monthly meetings of the council the plan
829 to sell the land was continuously brought up by its advocates. This group of persons, led by Yellow Horse, had been successful under white economy. They looked to the future, "We have to sell this land in order to get rations and so that the young people can grow up healthy. They have been dying. You ought to think of the younger people. We cannot stay as we are now. We shall be more like whites, and life will be easier." The opposition was led by dauntless old warrior chiefs such as Eagle Calf and Iron Shield, brother of Crowfoot. They had seen the Indians tricked by the original treaty of 1877 into giving up their land. They would be tricked no more; what they now had they would cling to. Those who wished to sell the land were both the dupes of the whites and underminers of Indian existence, they said.

Persistently, Yellow Horse continued his efforts. The meetings were violent name-calling affairs. Both sides accused the other of seeking profit. Yellow Horse was "crazy; he wanted to be head chief but was too lazy when he was young to go to war to get horses." Eagle Calf was "a wealthy man and so could afford to neglect the

[1]Dept. of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report*, 1903, p. 147 ff.

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
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of mutilation. This brings to our attention the enhanced status of women through the application of white law. Through English precedent a Blackfoot woman may hold property in her own name, thus having authority which lies beyond the control of her husband. Furthermore, English law does not reinforce the authority over her by the male members of her family, as does Blackfoot practice. Thus in a case where a woman complained to the agent about mistreatment by her husband which had the approval of her own brothers, the case would probably be decided in favour of the woman by a white magistrate. Women are legally freer today than formerly. Naturally such legal practices have undermined much of the familial authority. It has been broken down further by years of boarding-school life away from the elders, as well as the white law which permits an adult female self-determination, once she has passed the eighteenth birthday.

On the side of the male other factors have further undermined marital stability. In the former polygynous households, relations with another woman could sometimes be legalized by incorporating her into the family as a co-wife. Of course, this is not permissible today. Moreover, the number of services performed by a woman for her husband have decreased. Though cooking and child tending continue, the hides that she once tanned, the tipi and buckskin clothes that she once made are either not desired, or their equivalents can be purchased from stores. Economically, wives are less valuable.

Remarriage after separation or death of a spouse is vastly simpler than initial marriages. Relatives, preferably the older brothers, of a woman usually select a satisfactory male who, in case of acceptance, notifies the agency of the event. The customary five dollars in cash is given again and notice sent to the stock-man concerning the delivery of rations. Male initiative in proposing marriage also occurs, though via an intermediary; in such cases a woman is expected to consult her male relatives before an answer can be given. Elopement of an unmarried girl does occur, but amends should be made to the offended authority of the woman's brother by sending a proper gift, traditionally a horse. In case of an elopement from a husband, the wife's brothers, if they approve the change, should relay the gift to the offended husband.

Such a picture of marital instability, hence household instability, superimposed upon the amorphousness of many extended families, shows the fluidity of reserve social structure. The points of stability

224 136 137 During the late spring and early summer they congregated in enormous herds, migrated along established routes to the richest pastures and fattened on the fresh grass, coming into prime condition from June to August. But in the autumn and winter, when feed was scarcer and less nutritious, they scattered more widely, forming smaller herds, and were compelled to shift more frequently from place to place. These considerations affected not only the methods of hunting but the distribution [360] of population. While there was every advantage in the formation of large groups in summer for organized attack on the great herds, in the winter season there was need for the separation of the people into smaller groups scattered widely over the country.

The Bands

Thus, as among other Plains peoples, the Blackfoot tribes 221 formed effective units for only that part of the year when 361 abundant food and the opportunities for large-scale communal 621 hunting favoured concentration. For the rest of the year they were divided into a considerable number of smaller groups which did not, however, lose their identity during the summer 621 season. These smaller groups or bands were fundamentally economic and social units, camp groups adapted to the requirements of the winter. Each had its delimited territory. [131] Streams, ridges of high ground and other natural features were agreed upon as boundaries between the lands of adjacent camps. The nucleus of such a band was usually a number of male relatives and their families, but it was by no means exclusive; individuals or families from other bands, unless they were undesirable for some special reason, might join them. The remnants of a camp group that had suffered misfortune, or a man who had quarrelled violently with his relations, would join another band and, since habitual residence and participation in group affairs was the only essential condition, such new-comers soon became recognized members and might rise to leadership in the band. An individual was [672] responsible to his band. Every member contributed to any penalties another might incur, and would defend him against [591] attack even if guilty of murder. A woman usually went to live with her husband's group on marriage, and the children were considered as belonging to the father's band, but excep- •[595] tions were fairly common. A man might have several wives, but polygyny was probably rare in early times, save in the case of a few influential individuals. The bands of Blackfoot were thus essentially camp groups of relatives mainly connected in the male line, but often including connexions by marriage, and even strangers.

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888 "No, I don't think it is so great to be this old.[A] It was all right until lately, getting to see so many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren. I feel like all the young people are my grandchildren. But now I am nearly blind, and I have about lost my sense of taste and my appetite. I don't care to eat anymore, unless it is something real sweet that I can taste. Life has been very good to me, but I don't want to end it becoming helpless and feeble."

A TRADITIONAL BLOOD MARRIAGE: A Grandmother Who Married at Seven

582 In the old days of buffalo hunting and living with nature, my grandmothers often got married when they were still little girls, while my grandfathers often were likely to wait until they had overcome their love for constant fighting and adventure, which was usually not until they were near thirty 582 years old. It was not unusual for men in their twenties to be 595 single and living in the lodges of their parents, and it was common for a proud man of sixty or seventy to have six or seven wives, including some that were young enough to be his grandchildren.

The matter of multiple wives and young brides is another that must be seen from the viewpoint of my ancestors' natural 000 life-styles to be understood and appreciated. For other examples of such male-female relationships we need only look at wild animals, such as the buffalo and elk, that my ancestors lived near. The big old bulls are the ones who have harems of cows, while the young bulls hang around together and only occasionally manage to find a spare cow to take for a wife.

One result of those old-time relationships, if we place any value on the philosophy of survival of the fittest, is that in the past the older men among my people were those who had

A [i.e., about 100--Analyst]

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survived the many dangers of war and wilderness living and their offspring might be likely to survive in the same way. Because of the constant warring, the fatality rate among young men was pretty high, which gave the people a majority of women. That was probably the major reason why men had several wives.

However, just as wild bulls jealously protect their harems and fight intruders, so did my grandfathers watch over their wives. Tribal customs allowed them to kill intruders, or at least demand heavy retributions, but still the calls of nature could not always be ignored. Many young wives of old men in big households suffered from loneliness and a desire to be loved. Many young men risked their lives to find mutual satisfaction if they could meet with such a lonely girl out along one of the trails to the water or the firewood-gathering places. Some old men even sanctioned these relationships, as long as they were discreet and brought them no public disgrace. Occasionally an older husband would give up one of his younger wives if he knew that she was hopelessly in love with a good young man. However, more often such romances brought much frustration and unhappiness, and suicide was not uncommon among young, heartbroken women.

The tribal truth test for the virtuousness of women was the grand Sun Dance ceremony, since only those women who had been true to their husbands were eligible to make the sacred vows. It was not unusual for a husband to challenge his wife to put up a Sun Dance if he doubted her faithfulness to him. All members of the tribe were raised to understand that lying under any such sacred circumstances meant death to the liar and suffering to the relatives. That is not to say that the Sun Dance was mainly such a truth test for the holy woman, since most of those women lived well-known lives far above reproach. But there are stories of women whose virtuousness was publicly contested and whose death soon after was taken as final proof by all the people.

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A young Blood man named Black Plume and his two wives. One of their sons, as an old man, used to live next door to my family. He said his father and mothers got along well. Some notable and ambitious men among my ancestors had as many as ten wives. The last old-timer who officially had two died around the time I was born. (PHOTO: GLENBOW-ALBERTA INSTITUTE)

Three noted Blood women ready for a celebration in the 1920's. From left to right they are Double-Victory-Woman, Heavy Face, and Takes-a-Man. They were leaders of sacred ceremonies, members of the Motokiks society, and married to leading men. Except for the cloth of their dresses, and the funky hat in the middle, they appear as they might have one or two hundred years ago. (PHOTO: GLENBOW-ALBERTA INSTITUTE)

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ABOUT BABIES AND CHILDREN

My grandmothers didn't usually learn about childbirth until they were ready to have their first children. I was raised this way, too, and it is one of the things about our customs that I have never understood. As a young girl I used to ask my mother about having children. Either she would ignore me or she would say: "When the time comes, you'll find out about it." She was raised the same way, and so was her mother. My girl friends and I sometimes traded gossip and rumors about the subject, but we never really knew much about it. Some of the things we heard were good, and some were horrifying.

I still often hear of the stereotyped Indian mother who has her child alone, out in some field, and then comes back home and continues her work as if nothing happened. If there were Indians who did this, they were sure not my grandmothers. As soon as my grandmothers of the past knew that they were pregnant, they slowed down their work and began a disciplined period during which they were forbidden to do many things.

If it was a first pregnancy then the mother-to-be was given advice by an older woman with more experience, often a sister-in-law or the mother-in-law. Some tribes had elaborate ceremonies for girls reaching puberty, but ours did not. Even today a lot of girls in our tribe are really in the dark about having children. With the modern lack of discipline, this has created many problems.

If the husband of a pregnant woman could afford a second wife, he often got one at this time, to help out with the household. Otherwise he might ask a younger sister to move in and help—either his own or his wife's sister. If he had a widowed mother or aunt, she might come and do the work instead. His wife's mother was not eligible to help, since she was not allowed to be in the company of her son-in-law.

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a certain girl was by sending a very special present to the parents. Since the man was the boss of his family, it was up to him to decide. But you can be sure that most men consulted with their wives before deciding, and kind men consulted with their daughters also. This custom has just died out in recent years, since the time my own mother got married.

The special present was usually brought to the girl's parents by a friend of the young man who wanted her. If the parents accepted the gift, then the marriage was set. Sometimes this happened even though the girl didn't care at all for her suitor, or if she was already in love with someone else. In most cases, however, it didn't matter to the girls. They had been so closely watched while growing up that they didn't really have many opinions on the various eligible men. Few young men stood out by their bravery or early wealth. Parents of girls tried to get such men for their sons-in-law, since they were likely to provide well for their daughters and even for them in their old age. Parents who had several daughters hoped that their oldest one could find an ambitious husband who could afford to take the younger sisters when they became eligible. Some chiefs had over ten wives, many of whom were often sisters. I know of one woman who was only six or seven when she became the youngest wife of a head chief who had married her older sister.

Some parents tried to get their daughters married at a very early age, so that they would be virtuous to their first husbands and perhaps put up a Sun Dance someday. One of my distant grandmothers who is still living was given to a young man as a bride when she was only seven. Her parents were poor, and this young man showed a lot of promise. He had just finished school. The two spent their whole lives together, had many children, and were both successful and happy. She still laughs when she tells me how her new husband's little sister gave her toys to play with, after the marriage, and how he used

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tune if it should fall to the ground. Wolf Shirt proved his Power by never letting a Stem fall from his head. Mokakin and Ponah have seen him dance this way with all the Medicine Pipes still left among our People.

Ponah told us that her father, as a young man, was happily married to two sisters from the North Piegan divison. After one of the sisters died, Iron began investigating a young Blood woman for his next wife. The surviving sister became jealous and left him. So he married the Blood woman. She was the mother of Ponah and her sister, Mrs. Red Crow. After his third wife died he married the widow of Ghost Chest. She was an older woman, called Istsimpski, or "Hateful Face." Her son was Charlie Goodrider, who was quite a romantic character.

Ponah asked Mokakin to tell us about her father's horse raids. He related the time Iron was with One Spot and Head Walking when they raided the Crees. One Spot captured a Cree Medicine Pipe, against Iron's insistence, while Head Walking shot a Cree. Iron rode up to the Cree, dismounted, stabbed the man dead, and took his scalp.

As we talked, we began to hear singing faintly coming through the rising and falling of the wind outside. Slowly, the singing grew louder.

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must ask your husband to invite all the holy men to your lodge tomorrow night. I will teach you some songs and a ceremony which you must show them. If you do this then I will have my Power bring back the buffalo. But you must warn your People: my Power is always announced by a strong storm, and when it first arrives it will look like a buffalo, a lone bull. You must tell your People not to harm him. The rest of the herd will follow as soon as he has passed safely through the camp. 539 773 778

During her dream the woman was taught several songs she had never heard before. The Iniskim told her that he had many relatives about the prairie, and that all of them were in contact with the same Power as he. He told her that any of the People who wished to have good fortune from this Power should look for one of his relatives and bring them home and treat them with respect.

When the young woman woke up she wondered what to do about her dream, for she was quite shy of her husband. Only the sits-beside wife takes part in the husband's ceremonial functions, never the wife who sleeps closest to the door. When the husband went outside, the young wife told her older sister about the stone and the dream. The sister said, "I will tell our man what you just told me. If your dream comes true, then you may have my seat next to him. But if not, I will only pity you for what you will have to suffer." [595]

When the husband learned of the matter, he immediately sent out invitations to the camp's holy men. In a short while, they gathered in the home of the young woman and were served a small portion of berries, and broth made from scraps of leather. They were excited when they heard why they were invited, although one or two got up and left. Our Old People were always skeptical of someone who claimed to have been called upon in a dream and given a Power. [787]

With the approval of the holy men who remained, the husband asked his young wife to sit at the head of the tipi and lead the ceremony

As day broke, they saw an endless body of warriors all around them. They tried to retreat but it was no use. As they scattered, some were trapped in cottonwood groves, some were slaughtered while trying to swim across the river, and some were killed hiding in coulees, where our men threw large stones down at them. The Piegan and Blood chiefs finally called their men off to avoid further bloodshed, and the remaining Crees were able to make their escape. Exact figures are not known, of course, but it is believed that fatalities on our side were around 40, while the Crees lost 300 or more. 726 [727]

STORIES OF NATOSINA, OR EAGLE PLUME

One of my favorite Old People from the past was our uncle's father, Natosina. During most of his life he was known by the name Pita-Sapohp, or "Eagle Plume." Although he has been gone for close to forty years now, his name is still frequently mentioned at ceremonies and other gatherings of our Old People. He knew about all our Old Ways, and was a skilled Teacher of them. One Old Person described him to me as "Professor Eagle Plume." 793 [551]

Old Natosina was born around 1850. His father was named Not-Scared-of-Gros Ventres. Among his father's wives was his mother, whose name, *Otsani*, can no longer be translated. Because it was misunderstood, she was called Old Charlie, which stuck with her. Among her children were Natosina's brothers Running Wolf, Big Snake, Many Chiefs, Last Star, Crow Tail Feathers, and Dog. She also had a daughter, Three Owl Woman. [551] [553]

Natosina married his main wife, his sits-beside-him wife, as we say, while she was very young. Her name was Prairie Dog Woman, and she is best remembered as a holy woman who put up several Medicine Lodges. Around the year 1900, he took the widow of Low Horn for a second wife. Her name was SikskiAki, and she [595] [587]

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Atsitsina with his parents, Natosina and SikskiAki. He is wearing a blanket coat and holding a pipe bag. Natosina holds a buffalo tail whisk, which he uses for fanning himself and for sweat bathing.

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brought with her an infant son, Jack Low Horn. 793
With Natosina she soon had another son, who is [595] ●
our uncle, Atsitsina. For a short time Natosina
had three wives, all related, but the youngest one [587]
died without having children.

Old SikskiAki was given her name, "Black- [551]
Faced Woman," because of her dark skin. In
spite of that, she had blue eyes. Her mother, [553]
Blonde Big Nose, also blue-eyed, had been part [144]
French and part Mexican. *Her* father (Atsitsina's
great-grandfather) had been a French trader also
known as Bill, who was noted for having very long
red hair. Old SikskiAki's father was a Blood
named White Crane.

Natosina was the leader of every kind of 793
Sacred Ceremony—Medicine Pipe, Beaver Bun- 797
dle, Horns Society, Nighttime, and Medicine
Lodge. He was a noted doctor and spiritual ad-
visor. His war records include twenty-two differ-
ent raids, on which he killed seven enemy men
and captured well over one hundred horses. Like
many Old People he was baptized into the Catho-
lic Church in a mass ceremony that was explained

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mixed up some of his songs. For some years he kept a Beaver Bundle, which was later sold to Mrs. Walters by the man he transferred it to. He was Keeper of the Black Seizer's Society Pipe. He also owned a Medicine Pipe Bundle at one time, and from his friend, Robert Wilson, obtained the famous Weasel Medicine Robe that once belonged to Red Crow. 793 [156] [778] [425]

Black Plume had two wives while he was a young man. They were Long-Time Gun Woman and Black Horn. The latter was the mother of Dick Soup and Bob Black Plume. In his later years, he was married to an older woman for a short time, and then became the husband of Pretty Wolverine Woman, former sweetheart of Medicine Pipe Stem, whose romance led to the death of that young man along with her former husband, Charcoal. She lived with Black Plume until his death, around 1940. 793 595

Black Plume is said to have gone on about ten war raids. On one raid, he joined three of his friends to form one of several Blood parties that retaliated against the Crees for breaking a recent peace treaty. The Crees had raided the Blood camps in the summer of 1883 and made off with some eighty horses belonging to Head Chief Red Crow. Black Plume and his group located a Cree camp out on the prairie just before daybreak. They decided to take cover in a grove of trees and wait for nightfall. During the day some of the horses from the Cree camp wandered out to where they were, and the men immediately noticed that many of them were from Red Crow's herd. Each man captured one of the horses and headed back home. 793 721 793 726

When they arrived at the Blood camps, the Mounties were already waiting to arrest the raiders for horse stealing, which was by then 793 727 [177]

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"against the law." But when it was learned that all four horses had been stolen from Red Crow, the Mounties were forced to give up the arrests. Red Crow was so happy the Crees had lost some of his horses, he let each man keep the one he had brought home.

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MANY MULES

Many Mules was another member of the group that went on some of the final war parties and lived well into this century to tell about it. He belonged to the Fish Eaters band. In 1910 Many Mules was still living with his two wives, Medicine Strikes and Crow Woman. Among the Medicines he owned was the famous Never-Sits-Down Shield, which he got from the South Piegan chief, Curly Bear. The writer Apikunni recorded the following stories that Many Mules told him in the 1920s.

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I went on many war trails and counted coups on two Crees, two Kalispells, one Assiniboine, and one Crow, all of whom I killed. I also captured a woman from the River People on the west side of the Rocky Mountains.

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I once had a very narrow escape from the Crows. We were a very small party, only five of us. From the big camp of our People, then on Bow River, we went south to raid the Crows. After traveling many nights, we at last found a Crow camp. It was on Bighorn River, a little way up it from its junction with Elk River [the Yellowstone]. Night Light was showing all of herself; we could see almost as well as though it were daytime. We went into camp to take the good buffalo horses and war horses that were tied close to the lodges of their owners. I got four of them out without arousing the sleeping people. A little way from the camp circle, I mounted one of them, leading the others down the valley to meet my companions.

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Ha! I had gone but a little way when I came

through the edge of his shirt; neither had gotten hurt. 721 608

Now this is strange: one's name was Striped Wolf and the other's Striped Bird—just about the same name. They exchanged names. They shook hands and kissed, and became like brothers. All the Gros Ventre's relatives gave Striped Wolf a lot of presents—money, blankets, and other things. They remained good friends until they died. [553] [431]

THE HANGING OF CHARCOAL

Charcoal's days ended in 1897 at the age of thirty-nine, on the gallows at Fort MacLeod. Before his death, Tsako, as our People nicknamed him, became the most wanted man on Canada's western frontier. 682 [551]

Wilson wrote of Charcoal as a participant in a Nighttime Ceremony and recorded that he had owned a number of Medicines for which he sang songs: painted lodge and flag; painted lodge; Sioux sword for the Grass Dance; Horns Society; Mountain-Trim Tipi; Soldier's Society Pipe; Weasel-tail buckskin suits; Dogs Society; and bear knife. This last sacred article was a huge dagger with a handle made from a bear's jawbone. It was sought after and owned only by Powerful warriors. During the transfer ceremony for this knife, the new Owner was forced to strip and roll on a bed of thorns. At the end of the transfer the former Owner would hurl the sacred knife at the new Owner, who could have it if he survived and caught it. 778 425 [411] [237] [796] [785]

Charcoal had two wives. One was faithful to him, but the other, Pretty Wolverine Woman, was fickle and wild. Although she had been married to Charcoal for about five years, everyone in camp knew that she and a young man named Medicine Pipe Stem were lovers. They had been seen together while she went out after water. Charcoal's relative, Eagle Bear, had talked to her several times and warned her that her husband could punish her for her actions. Charcoal was known 682 837 [595] [411]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 28D-B]
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told him to take back his wife and keep his horses. He offered to give him any other goods that he wished to have. Yellow Painted Lodge sang another song and the spider dropped his burden and hurried back to the bunch of grass. He covered up the spider and blew on it, and again it looked like a spider-shaped piece of rawhide. He put it back in its buckskin cover and tied it on to his braid. The little figure of the man lay crumpled up where the spider had dropped it. 727 789 [533]

Yellow-Painted Lodge then told the Cree, "I didn't come here for anything else but my wife. If you will just give me a meal, we will be on our way home. I want you to have the horses I brought and you will be my brother. You can come to our camp and be my guest anytime." The Cree was happy to hear that, and he knew that no further trouble would come once Yellow-Painted Lodge had accepted food in his tipi. 727

At this time old Little Bear (SikskiAki's great-grandfather) had a very sickly baby. While Yellow-Painted Lodge was visiting, he was given the baby to hold, and Little Bear asked the old man to pray for the strength of the child. Yellow-Painted Lodge asked, "Do you want this baby to become a man?" Little Bear told him he did. Then he told Little Bear to make incense. He said, "I will sing my Power song. If my Power comes alive then I will give its name to this baby and it will grow up to be a strong man. He brought out his rawhide spider and placed it on a bunch of grass and began to sing. After he breathed on his hand, the spider began to move around, then ran across the floor to Little Bear and his wife. They saw it. Then it went back to Yellow-Painted Lodge, who put it away. He said, "Since my Power has come alive for your child, I will give him the name Spider." 755 553 [533] [551]

CROW-SPREADS-HIS-WINGS

At the time of his death, during the winter of 1953, Crow-Spreads-His-Wings was about ninety years old and the last man among the Bloods to 793 756 [595]

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Crow-Spreads-His-Wings at Fort MacLeod in 1947.

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have two wives, both of whom outlived him.

Crow-Spreads-His-Wings was the son of Wolf Old Man and the half-brother of our Old Man, the two having different mothers. His head wife was a holy woman and a very successful doctor. He, too, was a good doctor, in addition to leading Medicine Lodge ceremonies and all kinds of other holy gatherings. The family were Keepers of our Medicine Pipe Bundle many years ago.

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000 team, we ferried across the river and proceeded on our way, on Shonkin Creek passing the sheep ranch of Paris Gibson, who was later to be the father of Great Falls city. A fine man, a real man he was. At Arrow Creek—oh, welcome sight!—we discovered ahead of us several buffalo herds, whereupon Crow Woman in her Arikara language broke into prayers of thanks to the gods.

114 595 Hers had been a life of terrible experiences. When a young woman, a member of a Crow war party, swooping in on a small camp of Arikara buffalo hunters, had captured her, and had kept her for some years, more as a slave than as one of her captor's three wives. Then, in a fight between the Crows and the Bloods, she had been seized by one of the latter tribe, Spotted Elk, and she became his 114 fourth wife and a drudge for his three Blood wives. Many years passed, unhappily for her, and then, one day when the Bloods were trading in Fort Benton, she had come face to face with Kipp's Mandan mother. Though of different tribes, they had been close friends in their girlhood days. So now they hugged and kissed one another, and with tears Crow Woman told of her years of suffering under one and the other of her captors. Said Earth Woman when she had finished her tale: "Dear friend, here and now your troubles end. You shall not live with that Blood man another day. I will take you from him, to live with me."

With that Earth Woman went straight to Spotted Elk about it. He laughed, said Crow Woman was a fine worker, very useful to [411] him; he would not for any consideration let her leave him. Earth Woman offered him a new many-shots gun (Henry rifle) for her. No, she was worth many rifles, many horses to him. To which Earth Woman replied: "Either you take the rifle and let her go, or I will have the white seizers (soldiers), for your stealing of her, shut you up for many winters to come."

"No. No. Go not to them about it. Give me the many-shots gun and she is yours," he quickly answered.

136 Herds of buffalo, numerous bands of antelope, fled from us as we neared the junction of the Judith River and Sage Creek, and we saw a number of elk and deer when we crossed the river to make camp in the timber just above the mouth of the creek. While the

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584 "I did not tell him that. You know, daughter, that he is my more-than-friend, my more-than-brother; that in our fight with the Assiniboines, in the Bear Paw Mountains, he saved me from them though himself badly wounded."

"What? You told him then, that man of many wives, and old, of heart so cold that he never laughs, that he could have me?"

"No, daughter, I did not give you to him; I said that I would ask you to become his woman."

"Knowing well that I will not do it. Surely you were not afraid to tell your more-than-friend that I am not for him?"

581 584 "Daughter, it is that every woman of our tribe should marry, have children. All too few are our men. They fall in battle with our many enemies; they are continually being crippled, killed in the chase. Now you, desiring revenge upon the Crows, you can do far more by raising children, brave, strong youths to fight them, than you can by going yourself against them. Daughter, as you love me, as you love your mother, I call upon you to marry Talks-with-the-Buffalo, saver of my life. It is your plain duty to have children by him, brave sons to grow up and fight our many enemies."

The girl made no reply to that. She went out and across the camp to the lodge of her dead sweetheart's mother, Mink Woman, and remained with her a long time. Bear Head and I were sitting with Eagle Plume, smoking with him, when she came home; he had been telling us of Talks-with-the-Buffalo's sudden request for her, his hope that she would go to him. Very solemn, downcast, she was as she sat down beside her mother, leaned against her and said: "Father, I have been with Mink Woman; she thinks, as you do, I should marry, have sons to grow up and avenge the death of him we loved. So is it that I will marry your more-than-friend." And with that she began to cry. Bear Head and I got up and quietly left the lodge.

595 [583] With her various belongings, the girl moved into her new home that evening, and presently we learned that she was not happy there; *Otahki*, the younger of the two sisters Talks-with-the-Buffalo had married, was very jealous of the new wife and was slyly doing all that she could to make trouble for her in her new life. Even, at times, she boldly lied about her, told their man that, when the two went

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to get wood for the lodge fire, she herself did the heavy work, the other merely idling about and taking up a few dry branches now and then. To all of which Otter Woman would never make denial, and Talks-with-the-Buffalo would look at her, at each of them in turn, and grimly smile. 595

Otter Woman often came to visit her father and mother and tell them, incidentally, of fresh meanness that the jealous one had put upon her. And at last Eagle Plume, angry and hurt, said to her: "Daughter, I see that I made a mistake in urging you to marry my more-than-friend. I am disappointed in him. As he will not protect you from that lying woman it is for me to do so; go at once, and take up your belongings, and return home." [586]

"No, father, no," she replied. "You showed me my duty to our tribe. I shall remain with the man to whom you gave me, no matter how much his second wife lies about me." [581]

But as Bear Head said afterward, little did Otter Woman, or any of us, realize how mean was that jealous woman's heart.

Came from the north, from the camp of our brother tribe, the Bloods, four young men to visit friends in our camp, and one of them was Low Horn, he who was nicknamed "Handsome Man." And rightly: he was unquestionably the handsomest of all the men of the three tribes of the Blackfeet. So handsome, so graceful in all that he did, so perfect of figure and face that I shall not attempt to describe him. A bachelor and a lady killer he was, too, desired by all the maidens and doubtless by many a married woman. Some men were so jealous of him that when he staged one of his spectacular dances around the circle of the camp, they ordered their women into their lodges, there to remain until he had passed. Yes, Handsome Man was a dandy, a "fop," as we would say. He had no war record other than having been on one successful raid upon the horse herds of the Crees. Was he, as some maintained, a coward, deserving to be forced to wear a woman's gown, instead of shirt and leggings and breechcloth? [152] [577]

On a hot summer morning, soon after he arrived, word went the round of the camp that Handsome Man was going to dance. Under a shelter of poles and brush, close to their lodge, sat Talks-with-the- 595 837

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595 837 Buffalo and his women, and as I was passing he invited me to sit and smoke with him. I casually noticed that his sits-beside-him-wife, as the Blackfeet call a man's first wife, was idle; the two others were busily quilling the uppers of a pair of moccasins for their man, quilling in ancient designs and gorgeous hues.

"Would that I could have a pair of moccasins as beautiful as those are to be," I said.

"Get married, then, and have all the pretty moccasins that you can wear," Otter Woman replied.

"*Easy to do were I as good looking as he there coming,*" I said, pointing to Handsome Man, flanked by his singing, drumming friends and just then starting to dance along the inner line of the lodges of the big camp circle.

[535] [714] [411] [237] On they came, Handsome Man slightly in the lead, dressed in a suit of beautifully fringed and quilled war clothes, face and hands and moccasins red painted, brandishing a war club banded with snow-white eagle plumes. Lithely, gracefully, he danced, in perfect time with the thrilling singing and drumming of his followers. Said Talks-with-the-Buffalo, lips contemptuously curling: "But why war club, weapon that he has never used and never will use upon the enemy?"

"But he is still so young; give him time, my man; give him time to use it, as I am sure he will," the sits-beside-him wife replied.

"*Ha!* Wouldn't use it were he to live ten hundred years," he growled and spat upon the ground.

For all its apparent ease, Handsome Man's war dance was strenuous work, particularly on a day so hot; finally tiring, perspiration streaking his painted face, Handsome Man motioned his followers to be silent, and came to a stand close in front of our shelter. And just then Otter Woman held out a questioning hand to her jealous enemy, *Otahki*, and said, "Give me Handsome Man." And then; "Oh, what a mistake! I meant my awl; my awl that you borrowed."

But before she could finish, *Otahki* was already all but shouting to Talks-with-the-Buffalo: "My man! Did you hear her, your new wife? She told me, 'Give me Handsome Man.'"

Talks-with-the-Buffalo frowned, stared at Otter Woman. She

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returned his gaze, frankly, unflinchingly, and said, "I don't know why I named the dancer for he is nothing to me, nothing at all; no more than the passing wind."

"What a lie! She loves him so much that she can't think of anything else, even to remember that it was her awl that she wanted."

And Handsome Man and his followers heard; they had heard it all, so close were they to our shelter. The followers were embarrassed; their heads drooped; they looked at the ground, anywhere but toward us. But Handsome Man was pleased; boldly, smilingly, he looked at Otter Woman; glanced at angry Talks-with-the-Buffalo and again at Otter Woman. Happily, smugly, he looked at her, sure that, despite her denial of him, she, the most beautiful woman of the camp, was still another victim of his charms. Warily he glanced again at her grimly scowling man; again he smiled at her, and, signing to his followers to resume their drumming, went singing and dancing from us with renewed vigor and grace. Of us all, *Otahki* alone watched his sprightly going. Otter Woman raised her drooping head, tearfully, pleadingly looked at Talks-with-the-Buffalo, and began: "My man, . . ."

He shrugged his shoulders, looked away from her. As though half-dazed, she fumblingly gathered up her quilling materials and went slowly into their lodge. *Otahki* laughed. Her sister *Paiota* frowned at her and said: "Be still, you!"

Silently I handed the smoked-out pipe to my friend and joined Bear Head and his women, sitting under their sun shelter. They had sensed something unpleasant whence I had come, and I told them what had happened. Poor Otter Woman. Never could she be at peace there in that family, they said, for *Otahki* was of very mean heart, very jealous of her, and would do all that she possibly could to make Talks-with-the-Buffalo cast her off.

I had at that time a fly rod, one that I had brought from the States and dearly cherished, for it was, so far as I knew, the only fly rod in all Montana Territory. At sundown that evening I went fishing, accompanied by Bear Head. Not that he fished, or even ate fish, for they were the food of the dread Underwater People and therefore taboo by all of the Blackfoot tribes. But he keenly enjoyed

Cut-Nose

The following day broke so hot and windless that, right after our morning meal, we all gathered in the slightly cooler shade of our sun shelter. So was it that we saw *Otahki* emerge from her lodge and after a moment move slowly out into the camp circle, pausing now and then to speak with some of those she met. Bear Head gave me a nod and a look of understanding when she appeared, and we kept our eyes upon her; and so, as it proved, did his two wives, for suddenly the elder of them exclaimed: "Bear Head! Look at *Otahki*, across there; close in front of Three Bulls' lodge, standing and talking with Handsome Man. What a bad one she is."

"Pretending to be so good! What can they be talking about? I am minded to run and call Otter Woman out, so that she can get Talks-with-the-Buffalo out to see them there," said the younger wife.

"You two, you are not to speak of it to anyone. It matters not to us what that woman does," Bear Head emphatically told them.

"But it does concern us. You know how mean she is to Otter Woman; we should do all that we can to help her, she our close friend," pleaded the older wife.

"You two, you heard me," Bear Head crossly replied. And just then *Otahki* and Handsome Man parted, she strolling down to the lower end of camp and thence back to her lodge, and he entered Three Bulls' lodge, in which he was a guest.

Later in the day, when for a moment we chanced to be alone, Bear Head said to me: "Those two, this morning; no doubt they arranged for another love meeting in the brush."

Otahki and Otter Woman, always together as was proper, were the water carriers for Talks-with-the-Buffalo's lodge. On this evening, near sunset it was, as the two were going for a supply to last the night, *Otahki* suddenly exclaimed: "Oh, I forgot that I need water for myself; for washing my other gown. I will go back for another bucket and meet you at the creek."

Otter Woman went on across camp and into the trail running through the timber to the creek and, when about halfway to the stream, heard a quick step close in her rear. It couldn't be *Otahki* back so soon, she thought, and then, before she could turn to look, Handsome Man was upon her; clasping her tightly to him; pinioning

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

595
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her arms to her sides and saying, "You are here, my sweetheart. I am glad; glad. Come, hurry. Our horses are out here a little way; a good one for you."

"Let me go, you dog-face, you nothing-man," she cried, struggling to free herself.

"Why talk that way? This is no time to talk. Come on," he urged.

Harder than ever she tried to get out from his encircling arms; to bite him. Little by little he was forcing her backward from the trail; suddenly her foot struck a fallen sapling and she went down upon her back, he with her; and then he was trying to raise her up onto her feet. She felt for her sheath knife with her now free hand; grasped its handle but could not draw it. He was saying to her: "Why pretend, my sweetheart? Come, we must hurry to the horses."

"You dog-face! Are you crazy? Go with you? Never! Let me go. Let me go," she cried.

And then they heard one all but shout: "Badger Woman! Look at them. Look at her, that Otter Woman; she who always pretends to be so good."

At that, Handsome Man sprang off into the brush, and, free of him, Otter Woman got up and faced *Otahki* and that one with her, solemn-faced Badger Woman, sits-beside-him-wife of Red Bird's Tail. And laughing, dancing, pointing, *Otahki* again said to Badger Woman: "Oh, what a two-tongue she is! It was only this morning that she said that Handsome Man was nothing to her; no more than the passing wind. Well, Talks-with-the-Buffalo shall know of it at once. I am going, going, going to tell him, at once, to tell him what we found here."

Away she went, lightly running, swinging her empty pail. And said Otter Woman to the other: "I hope that you don't think that I am a bad one, a liar. I had never spoken with that dog-face. He surprised me, seized me; wanted me to run off with him. I was trying to get at my knife to stab him when you two came."

Old Badger Woman made no reply to that; she only stood and stared at the young one, sorrowfully stared at her, then turned and went back upon the trail, shaking her head, muttering to herself.

Hardly knowing what she was doing, Otter Woman recovered

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

her bucket, filled it at the creek, and trembling turned back toward camp. She dreaded returning to her lodge and facing Talks-with-the-Buffalo. She was minded to go straight to her father and mother, seek their protection. But no. She was innocent; never in her whole life had she done anything that was not right; all knew that she was a good, virtuous woman. She would tell her man that the Blood, the dog-face that he was, had made a surprise attack upon her, and he could not help believing that she spoke the truth. "Oh, Sun; all you Above Ones: Pity me; help me," she silently prayed, and thrust aside the door curtain and went in.

But only *Paiota* and *Otahki* were within; and the latter meanly smiling, said to her: "You are wondering where is our man? Well, he took up his gun and went out to kill your sweetheart, Handsome Man."

"You bad woman, you know that he is no sweetheart of mine. Oh, what a terrible tongue you are!" Otter Woman replied.

"I know, and so does Badger Woman, what we saw out there near the creek. *Ha!* when our man returns he will make you cry; and then out you go, you and all that you have here."

Said Otter Woman then to the elder wife: "Surely you don't believe that the dog-face Blood is anything to me?"

"Girl, all I know about is what I hear. I am sorry, but truly it all looks bad for you," *Paiota* replied.

None of this came to us until later; but about this time we in Bear Head's lodge became aware of excitement on the other side of camp, and presently Bear Head went out to learn what was going on there. So was it that, after a while, we learned that Talks-with-the-Buffalo was seeking Handsome Man; wanting to kill him. But the latter had disappeared, gone off with two horses, one of them owned by a Blood friend, and taken without his knowledge or consent. Upon learning that, Talks-with-the-Buffalo had come home, saddled his fastest buffalo horse, and set out in pursuit of him. And then, of course, and soon, we learned, the whole camp learned what it was all about, *Otahki* being only too eager to tell of her and Badger Woman's discovery in the timber.

The tale of it came to Eagle Plume's lodge, and he and his woman

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

595 837 [684] [782] hurried to their daughter and urged her to return to them; they were not going to allow her to be disfigured because of *Otahki's* lies. And that one they denounced with all the epithets of the Blackfoot language. But Otter Woman would not listen to their pleadings. She had done no wrong; she had prayed the Above Ones for help; they were with her, they would not allow her to suffer for something that she had not done. To leave her man's lodge now would be to admit that she was guilty.

It was near midnight when Eagle Plume and his woman went back to their lodge, without their daughter. And when, a little later, we took to our couches, Talks-with-the-Buffalo had not returned.

But he came back sometime in the night, so Bear Head's elder wife said when she had built our morning fire and awakened us. And she had it from *Paiota* that he had not overtaken Handsome Man.

As Bear Head and I were returning from our early plunge in the creek, he said to me: "In Talks-with-the-Buffalo's lodge, this morning, there will be a big talk about Otter Woman. If he fails to invite [574] us, we must anyhow attend it."

"Will you tell the gathering what we saw out here, two nights back?" I asked.

"I don't know. I don't know what I shall do about it." And then, when we were almost to the doorway of our lodge, he brought me [562] to a stand and added: "The strength of our tribe is in our women. The good ones should be praised, favored in every way; the bad ones should be punished."

[574] [623] It was about ten o'clock when Talks-with-the-Buffalo stood before his lodge and shouted invitations to this and that prominent man of the camp to come to his lodge for a talk. Bear Head and I were not named. We saw the great ones go in one by one: White Calf, the head chief; Running Crane; Three Suns; Fast Buffalo Horse; Little Dog; and other clan chiefs and medicine men to the number of twelve. Then we slipped in after them and seated ourselves just to the right of the doorway. Came in then still another uninvited one, Otter Woman's father, Eagle Plume, and sat down on my right. His face was grim. And last of all came Badger Woman and her man and sat just within the doorway.

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Grim, too, was Talks-with-the-Buffalo, upon his couch at the rear of the lodge. *Paiota*, solemn of face, sat with him as was her right. Upon her own couch, to the left of the fireplace, was *Otahki*, erect, bright eyed, eager for the talk to begin. Upon a third couch, between that of *Otahki* and the doorway, sat Otter Woman; bowed over; motionless; blanket over her head and partly concealing her face. The invited ones were all of them on the right side of the lodge, their seats spreadings of soft buffalo robes, White Calf nearest of them to their host.

None spoke. The silence became oppressive. White Calf broke it: "Yes?" he asked.

"Ah, yes," Talks-with-the-Buffalo replied, and then: "My friends, you have heard recent talk about one of my women, Otter Woman, there sitting. I now want you to hear just what her accuser says of her, and then help me decide what shall be done about it."

"*Ah. Ah*," several of the gathering acquiesced, and he sternly said to the accuser: "*Otahki!* Talk!"

"*Ah!* I will! she eagerly replied. And then: "Chiefs, and you, sacred men, listen: From the time when Otter Woman came here to live with us, I suspected that she was bad, and then I made certain that she was. It was when Handsome Man came dancing to where we sat. I had borrowed her awl, and wanting it, she held out her hand and said to me: 'Give me Handsome Man.' It was him she was thinking about, not her work. It was him she wanted, not our own man, so good and kind to her. Given the opportunity, I knew she would be his sweetheart. So was it that I decided to watch her closely.

"Last evening, as on every evening, she and I went to get water for the night. I forgot that I needed some for myself, and when we were halfway to the creek I remembered and went back for another bucket. Again on my way to the creek, I asked Badger Woman to go with me, and she did. As we were going along we heard talking, saw a movement of some brush near the trail; we went nearer and saw a man and a woman upon the ground. The man saw us, got up and ran away. He was Handsome Man. And then we saw that the other was Otter Woman. I had been right. She was a bad woman. I ran and told our man about it. There. I have told you the truth. That is all."

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

595 839 623 Another long silence. Broken by White Calf: "Badger Woman, what have you to tell us about this?"

The old woman did not reply, nor look up. She stared at the fireplace, stonily, as though she had not heard the chief. And after a little he said, impatiently: "Come now, you heard me. Talk!"

Then as it became evident that she did not intend to reply, old Red Bird's Tail gave her a vicious nudge and hissed: "Talk, woman! Answer him, if you don't want me to make you cry."

"Don't strike me, you mean old man," she said to him, and then to White Calf, to us all: "Oh, how I hate tale-bearing. Hate it! Hate it! But if you must know: yes, we came upon the two, out there in the timber. But I don't believe that Otter Woman is that Blood man's sweetheart; she appeared to be angry; as though she had been fighting him."

"So I was. I was trying to get out my knife and stab him," Otter Woman cried.

"*Ha!* If he wasn't her sweetheart, if she hated him, why didn't she cry out, shout for help, as any frightened woman would have done?" *Otahki* loudly queried. And I saw that that impressed the chiefs, several of them nodding to one another, and Little Dog exclaiming: "*Ah,* Proof enough that she was there to meet the worthless Handsome Man."

It was then that we heard a commotion in the crowd that had gathered before the lodge; subdued talk and exclamations of surprise; and bounced in and stood glaring at us, Otter Woman's mother. And [606] all there looked up at her as though they could not believe their eyes, their mouths wide open in astonishment; for never before in the history of the tribe had a woman intentionally come into the presence of her son-in-law. It was something that was just not done; son-in-law and mother-in-law used every precaution to avoid even seeing one another at a distance.

Said this one now: "Yes, I know what you all think of me, but I don't care." She ran on and knelt beside her daughter, clasped her in her arms, and continued: "You, Little Dog, I heard what you said. Yes, and I know what you all think. But I am here to tell you that you are wrong; that my daughter has ever despised that Handsome

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Man. You shall not, shall not punish her, mutilate her for something that she has not done!"

With that, she clasped Otter Woman closer to her and sat glaring at drooped over Talks-with-the-Buffalo and at the row of chiefs; and they were mute, not yet having recovered from their astonishment at her presence here.

Bear Head gave a little cough. Whispered to me: "I am going to tell them what we know of this."

"Yes," I sighed, and he began.

"Talks-with-the-Buffalo; chiefs; and you, oh, Sun's men: *Apikuni*, here at my side, and I were not invited to this talk, but we anyhow came, and for a purpose—for the good of our tribe. You remember what happened to us some summers back, when a certain woman, vowing that she was pure, a faithful wife, took part in building our great offering to Sun, Sun's lodge, and afterward proved to have been a bad woman. Because of her lying vow her man died; our war parties were defeated; many of our hunters crippled, some killed in their endeavors to keep their loved ones supplied with food. Well, it is to prevent another such misfortune that *Apikuni* and I are here. My friends, not Otter Woman, but her accuser, that woman there, is the unfaithful wife, the secret sweetheart of that one we call Handsome Man."

As Bear Head finished, he was rigidly pointing to *Otahki*. And suddenly she drooped; shrank back from the edge of her couch and faltered: "Oh, no. No. You lie."

"Oh, yes, you bad one. And know this: *Apikuni* and I are the two who discovered you and Handsome Man hugging one another there on the trail," he replied.

"You saw them doing that? When? Tell us about it," Talks-with-the-Buffalo demanded.

"Oh, no. No," *Otahki* wailed; and drawing her blanket over her head, sank still lower upon her couch and trembled with fear of what was to come.

Bear Head was not five minutes in telling of our discovery of the two in the timber and of *Otahki's* meeting with her lover in camp on the following day. He finished, and Talks-with-the-Buffalo said

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

595 837 623 to him: "Bear Head, it was good of you and *Apikuni* to come and tell us all this. But for you we would doubtless have punished the wrong woman. It is terrible, how very bad some women are. Very, very terrible. And there is something more that I want to know about this bad one of mine." And then he roared, "You *Otahki!* Sit up! Remove your blanket!"

"Oh, no. No," she pleaded, then shrieked as he sprang to her, tore off her blanket, and jounced her to a sitting position upon her couch. Returning then to his place, he said to her: "The truth, now, or I will cut out your tongue: As are a man and wife to one another, so were you with that Blood man, out there in the timber?"

Her "Yes" was so low that we barely heard it.

"And then you lied to him; you told him that Otter Woman loved him, wanted to run off with him to his Blood tribe."

Again a faltering, frightened "Yes."

"You didn't care how bad, how mean you were if only you could get Otter Woman into trouble, cause her to be despised by all. Well, we have now six such women in our camp, and you shall be a seventh one."

"Oh, no! No! No! Oh, Talks-with-the-Buffalo, oh, my man, pity me, pity me," she shrieked. And her sister *Paiota* said to him: "She is so young. Oh, only send her off, and let that be the end of it."

837 623 684 "You, *Paiota*, close firmly your mouth," he replied. And then to the row of us: "My friends, little did I think that I would ever be shamed as this woman has shamed me. You agree, do you not, that she should be made to suffer the punishment that our tribe has ever inflicted upon women of her kind?"

"*Ah! Ah! Ah!*" they emphatically replied.

"*Ah.* It is decided. Little Dog, Running Crane, and you, Fast Buffalo Horse, do you three seize her, firmly hold her."

"Oh, no! No! No!" the woman shrieked, springing from her couch and making for the doorway. But the three had her before she could reach it; they drew her back across the lodge and held her before her man; by arms and head firmly held her; and he, pinching her nose with thumb and finger, with one quick stroke of his knife, cut it off, and contemptuously tossed it into the fireplace. By that

killed a Blackfoot for his whiskey, and when members of another band mistakenly believed that their chief had been slain, they attacked the Bear People, killing many of the men in the camp. Many White Horses, a survivor and younger brother of the dead chiefs, became the new leader but most of the remnants of the band were absorbed into the Fish Eaters. 621 614 628 622

Among the Followers of the Buffalo offshoot bands, the Many Fat Horses was one of the oldest and, during the mid-19th century, one of the largest. The name was simply a reflection of the wealth of its members. 621

The earliest known leader was a man named Fish Child who relinquished the position to his brother Many Spotted Horses in the 1850s. During the winter of 1859–60, the band was torn with dissension when the retired chief became involved in a family dispute with another brother, Hind Bull, who was considered to be a subchief of the band. The discord finally erupted into a fight near Rocky Mountain House, in which the two brothers killed each other. 622 175 621 175 578 622

Many Spotted Horses, who was left as the sole chief of the band, was noted for his wealth in horses and by the size of his household. In 1855 he was said to have had twenty-three wives, keeping eleven in one lodge and twelve in another. At the 1877 treaty his family was recorded at ten women and thirty-one children. 622 175 622 175 595

With this personal following, Many Spotted Horses became more and more independent of the parent Followers of the Buffalo and when, in 1871, his band was involved in a bloody dispute with the Many Children band, he simply abandoned it and went to his mother's band, the Lone Fighters, where he eventually became their chief. Those who did not follow him went to the Many Children, and the Many Fat Horses virtually ceased to exist. 622 621 [628]

The Many Children, although an offshoot of the Many Fat Horses, appeared to have had more of an allegiance to the Followers of the Buffalo than did their own band chief. The Many Children were aptly named, for they were formed by a man named Not Afraid Of The Gros Ventres, [595]

who had ten wives and sixty children.

From the beginning, the Many Children had the reputation of being wild and unmanageable, not in a warrior sense, but in tribal and domestic affairs. The split with the Many Fat Horses occurred when a son-in-law of Not Afraid Of The Gros Ventres became a favorite of Many Spotted Horses and gained the jealousy and ill will of his brothers-in-law. One day, when he went to the Many Children camp, he was attacked by the family and before he was killed he had slain Not Afraid Of The Gross Ventres and two sons.

The ensuing scandal caused the Many Children, now under the leadership of a son named Running Wolf, to become alienated from their fellow Bloods. A year later, they became involved in a dispute with members of the All Tall People band, resulting in a number of deaths on both sides. A trader during that period commented (in Graham, 1956:17):

> At one time they numbered twenty-eight lodges, approximately between fifty and sixty fighting men. A feud broke out between them and another branch of the same tribe and at the time I speak of the [Many Chidren] had been reduced to two lodges and the survivors had taken refuge in the South Piegan camp.

They remained separated from the Bloods until the extermination of the buffalo forced them to settle on their reservation in 1880. As a result, Running Wolf was not at the Canadian treaty and was not recognized as a chief until a year after he had come home. And even after they were on their reservation, the Many Children were an unruly lot. "They were a wild bunch," said one informant (Harry Mills, 1953, pers. comm.), "and gradually they all got killed off, mostly by the Bloods themselves." "Even today," said another (Goldfrank, 1939), "the women in the Many Children band are like men and want their own way in everything. You can't tell them anything. They are wild and run with many men."

The Marrows, also a Followers of the Buffalo offshoot, was named because of their fondness for buffalo marrow. The only known leader was White Calf, who was also one of the leading war

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28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

buffalo went out of sight." Before this time, these Indians of the Plains had been buffalo hunters and horse raiders. Afterwards, and by a somewhat devious process, they became cattle breeders and wheat farmers.

Some one hundred and fifty years earlier, the introduction of the horse and the gun had also radically affected their mode of life. Mobility increased, the hunting range was extended, competition was intensified, both outside and inside the tribal group. The horse became the most sought-for and fought-for possession, and despite disease, accidents of climate and enemy raids, accumulation was possible and led, in the course of time, to marked wealth differences. Some men might have one hundred horses (Maximilian, Prince of Wied-Neuwied, gives a much larger figure) and some might have only a few or none. The dangers of decrease were mitigated by elaborate manipulation. The horse became not only the measure of wealth but the medium of exchange. Everything—trade goods, bride price, ceremonial privilege, and often personal support—were paid for in horses. Loss in capital was temporary. Pipes, bundles, society insignia, could all be resold, often at a profit, and a return for "gifts" or conspicuous distributions at give-aways was normal expectancy. In addition, a poor man who had to borrow a horse from a rich patron—not infrequently the band chief—would have to pay over one-half his kill to his benefactor.

Thus the fact that great numbers of horses could be accumulated and held for a considerable period led to certain advantage; and this advantage was in no way destroyed by manipulation. Shrewdly organized, it could build prestige and bring support.

It was particularly in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, when the fur trade was expanding and more goods came into the hands of the Blood, that the demonstrations of wealth became insistent. It was in this period that the rich man increased the number of his wives (he might have six or seven, while the poor man could not pay for one and had to be content with surreptitious visits to a younger and "uncertain" wife of a more fortunate tribesman); and having many wives, the rich man's tipi could be large and impressive (it was women's work to clean and tan the hides, sew them together and erect the dwelling); and it was also at this time that the "favorite," the *minipoka*, the "child of plenty" received formal recognition as a means of exploiting wealth. The influence of this institution on the father-child relationship has been significant. Today, in a different setting, its role is particularly so.

But whatever the potential increase in the food supply, or the possibility and advantage of accumulation after the introduction of the horse, for the Blood in the buffalo period, life was still precarious. Ex-

33: Bradley G-3 (1871-1877) 1923
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584 secures the services of a friend, who goes to the father of
583 his intended, states his desire and enumerates the gifts to
585 be made to him in the event of his consent. If the father gives favorable ear to his suit, he simply sends the girl to the young warrior's lodge, who there receives her and the marriage ceremony is over. It is usual for the parents of the girl to send with her as presents to her husband such articles as their means allow, and these often exceed in value the gifts that have been received from him. Two or three horses or their equivalent in other goods constitute
[562] the customary offering in cases of intended marriage. The wishes of the girl are not consulted pending the matrimonial negotiations, but she rarely, if ever, objects.

582 Such is the custom to which she has grown up and she
607 is a passive instrument in her father's hands. It is to be
[562] remarked, however, that should she have a brother-in-law of mature years, it is even more important to conciliate him. To him revert all the proffered gifts and his opposition to the marriage would generally prevent its occurrence. Where there are several brothers-in-law it is the eldest only who enjoys this consideration.

POLYGAMY

595 Polygamy is extensively practiced among the Blackfeet and the number of wives a man may have is only limited by his ability to procure and support them. If the eldest daughter of a family is first married, it is tacitly understood that her younger sisters are bound to her husband likewise, and as fast as they arrive at the proper age they are sent to him without ceremony.

FATHERS-IN-LAW AND MOTHERS-IN-LAW

602 From the moment of marriage all direct intercourse between a husband and his wife's relatives or a wife and her husband's relatives was at an end. The husband addressed his wife's family only through her, and she observed the same rule with regard to his. Relatives by marriage sought to avoid meeting each other and would turn out of their paths for that purpose, but when an encounter was unavoidable they would hang down the head or muffle the

Very hard work it was too. It took a sturdy, industrious woman to dress all of the hides required by a family. Indeed, the need for many helping hands in this difficult task has been cited as one of the reasons why successful hunters usually took several wives. 281 462 [595]

Skin Dressing

The dressing of a buffalo hide involved a series of simple processes. Fragments of tissue and fat mixed with blood still adhered to the inner side of a buffalo hide after skinning. The woman's first task was to remove this matter by a process known as fleshing. She stretched the hide out on the ground, hair side down, and drove lodge pins through it at intervals around the edge to hold it in place. She knelt on her knees over the hide and hacked away the undesired matter with short, vigorous blows of a sharp-toothed, fleshing tool held in her right hand. (See figure 3a) 281 [412]

3a. Fleshing. Removing tissue and fat

Then, after the hide had cured and bleached in the sun a few days, she took an adze-like tool and scraped the inner surface of the hide to an even thickness. She stood on the hide, leaned over and chipped away the surface by moving her sharp-bladed tool much as a skilled carpenter uses a plane. When she was satisfied that the inner surface of the hide was smooth and even, she turned it over and removed the hair from the outside with this same tool. Some women preferred to take the hair off with blows from a rock instead of with the scraping [412] [412]

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42: Kehoe A,G-4,5 (1953, 1956) 1960
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vation may be reflected in the surviving tipi-ring clusters. Eggan's paragraph (1952, p. 40) is suggestive in this regard:

> Collier has noted that the social organization of the Plains tribes took a series of forms: the camp circle, two types of large bands, the camp based on extended kinship, and the temporary hunting camp, each of which was adapted to the annual cycle of subsistence as well as to the social environment. It is important to note that tribes coming into the Plains with more complex formal social structures were in the process of giving them up in favor of the more flexible band and camp organization; and conversely, the more simply organized Great Basin groups developed a more complex organization.

Using the information from Bradley (1900, p. 258), Lewis (1942, pp. 35–49), and Ewers (1955, pp. 131–134, 307–308), the following table has been worked out to indicate the possibilities of chronological ordering of tipi-ring sites in the area of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. Study of this table leads to the conclusion that most of the tipi rings on the Reservation date from the 19th century (cf. p. 444, table 2 and paragraph following).

TABLE 3.—*Temporal change in Blackfoot tipi size*

Date	Period	Size of lodge in number of skins	Floor diameter (feet)	Number of—		Reasons
				Occupants	Wives	
Before 1730.	Pre-horse	6-8	About 10	6-8	(?)	Limited traction power of dogs restricts size of lodge; less value in women's labor, more equal sex ratio favors fewer wives, smaller family.
1730	Generation after acquiring horse.	"Larger"	(?)	One family to a tipi; "leader's" holds 30.	Probably 1-4.	Horse permitted transportation of larger lodge, more lodges to a group.
1830	Fur trade expansion.	Average 6-12 Wealthy 18-20. Extreme 40	10 to 14 or 16. About 16 30	Average 6-10. Large family. Up to 100	Average 3 6-16	Polygyny increasing due to value of female labor in processing hides, high death rate of men in warfare; greater wealth in horses makes possible more luxurious lodges.
1870	Competitive fur trade.	Beginning of abandonment of skin tipi for canvas lodge.	20	Up to 100	Up to (rarely) 20 or 30.	Intensification of factors cited above.
1955	Present	Canvas lodge	15-22.5	7-10	1	Erected only for traditional dancing celebration's weekend encampment; many lodges family heirlooms, put up in memory of deceased relatives.

CONCLUSIONS

The material of this paper comprises a preliminary attempt to gather historical, ethnographic, and archeological evidence illuminat-

54: Lancaster F-3(1958-1966)1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana

foot converts—an old chief and his family—were accepted in Christian baptism by Father DeSmet. 175 797

The Roman Catholic missionaries, whom the Blackfoots called "Black Robe Medicine Men," were followed shortly by the Protestants ("Short Coat Medicine Men"): a Methodist, the Rev. Robert T. Rundel, ministered to the Blackfoots at Ft. Edmonton, Canada, in 1840, and a Presbyterian, the Rev. Elkanah Mackey, whose wife was the first White woman to be seen in Blackfoot country, spent a *whole month* at Ft. Benton in 1856.

Actually, no permanent Protestant mission was established among the Indians of Montana until the 1890's, and this mission was a delayed result of the well-known "Peace Policy" of President Grant. After an attempt to place the Indian Bureau under the jurisdiction of the Army (which probably would have meant the extinction of the Indian) had been defeated in Congress in 1870, Grant's administration decided, incredibly, to allot the several Indian reservations to the influence of various organized church groups. Despite the fact that no Methodist missionary had ever been among the Blackfoots in the United States, the Blackfoot Reservation fell to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Jesuits, who with the active encouragement of Blackfoot Agent Major Alfred J. Vaughan, himself a Protestant, had already established a mission among the South Piegans, were literally forced to withdraw from the Reservation and to confine their missionary efforts to the wandering Blackfoot bands. 175 797 648

From the very first, Christian missionaries among the Blackfoot Indians found themselves hoeing a very rocky row. The desire of the Blackfoots to be converted to Christianity did not exactly create a Coney Island crush around the baptismal fount, and there were several very obvious reasons for this. (1) The Blackfoots could not understand the rivalry and dissention among various factions of the same religion (the Black Robes vs. the Short Coats). (2) The Blackfoots could not quite dig a religious attitude which simultaneously venerated motherhood and condemned sex. The shortage of men caused by hunting accidents and constant intertribal warfare made polygamous marriage among the Plains Tribes a social and economic necessity, and those Indians that took one wife in Christian marriage invariably kept a few spares around the teepee (frequently the younger sisters of wife No. 1) in accordance with the Indian concept of matrimony. (3) The Indians were understandably unenthusiastic about religious tenets which condemned two of the primary virtues of traditional Plains Indian culture—the steal- 175 797 [595] [183]

54: Lancaster F-3(1958-1966)1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
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622 ning Wolf, gave me his name: the other boys were named Left-
[55] hand Gun, Back Gun, Cross Guns, and Own Gun."

The Chief did not see fit to name his sisters, so I did not worry the subject. Instead, I asked him whether all these children had had the same mother.

"No. My mother, Black Snake Woman, was the mother of four
• [595] boys and two girls. The mother of the others was my father's second wife, Two Catcher. [These were not the only wives that Onistáipokah had during his lifetime—he had at least nine—but he had these two simultaneously.] One of my half-sisters is still living; her name is Blanche Two Stabs, and she lives over at Babb."

I reminded the Chief that he had forgotten to mention his other brother, the Indian on the buffalo nickel, and here began my will-o'-the-wisp search for the true identity and claim-to-fame of the celebrated Two Guns White Calf.

"You are referring to Two Guns, but the fact is that Two Guns was neither my brother nor the model for the Indian head on the buffalo nickel. Two Guns was the son of a North Piegan man named Many Chief and a North Blackfoot lady named Red Otter Woman. My stepmother [the reference here is to Two Catcher, Onistáipokah's second wife; she was not actually the Chief's stepmother] adopted Two Guns when he was a baby and she raised him along with her own children, but Two Guns bore no blood relationship either to myself or to any of my brothers or sisters."

000 Somewhat taken aback by this totally unexpected information, I asked why it was that Two Guns had become so widely associated with the Indian image on the nickel.

"Largely it was the work of Jim Hill. [Hill not only controlled the Great Northern Railway but virtually monopolized commercial tourist and vacation facilities within Glacier Park.] Hill met Two Guns at Glacier Park Lodge, and at the time that the buffalo nickel first was minted [1913], Hill and another official took Two Guns back east and told him to say that he was the Indian on the nickel. I think that Two Guns really did believe that his likeness had inspired the design of the buffalo nickel, but actually the Indian profile on the coin is not that of Two Guns but of Two *Moon*, a Cheyenne—and Two Moon was only one of several Indians the designer of the nickel used in constructing the Indian head that you see on the nickel."

The Chief had never given me any misinformation of any kind, but his contentions were so rigidly at odds with popular local belief that I felt obligated to research the matter as thoroughly as possible.

Part of my afternoon was passed in just thumbing through old
122 magazines and mail-order catalogues, and although this type of
156 reading is not to be recommended as a steady diet, it certainly is revelatory of a basic difference between the personality structures of Whites and Indians. A great deal of modern advertising is obviously directed by the knowledge that the White person, whether male or female, has become so confused by the rapidly changing roles of both men and women within the framework of our society that he is no longer quite certain of his own identity and will consequently grab at almost anything that promises to reestablish him in the eyes of his peers as belonging to the proper gender. The Indian,
156 on the other hand, although he has in large measure been deprived of his cultural identity, still possesses in very strong degree that sense of sexual identity for which so many Whites are groping; such phrases as "A real MAN's smoke," and "Banking with a feminine touch," mean absolutely nothing to an Indian, and Indians in general are very poor targets for advertising of this sort.

562 Regarding Indian women (and I do my share of regarding), I believe that the Blackfoot woman of today is definitely a happier person than her White sister, and I feel sure that this same contrast existed in the old days. The Blackfoot wife was never the slave or chattel that she has been pictured as being. True, Blackfoot mar-
562 riages usually were arranged affairs, but the arrangement had the
584 same social and economic basis that most modern White marriages have, and a Blackfoot girl could refuse to accept her family's choice
[583] of husband if she wished. And a Blackfoot girl was not bought or purchased by her husband; gifts were exchanged between the suitor and the bride's family, and the more expensive the gifts the suitor could provide, the better were his chances for receiving the blessings of his future in-laws, but the final choice was up to the girl.

562 Certainly the Blackfoot woman was expected to do her share of
593 work, and the classier were her domestic attainments the more
427 desirable was she as a bride; but the teepee and its furnishings were
[581] the property of the wife, not the husband, and for good cause a Blackfoot woman could tell her husband to get out of the teepee and stay out. Even the meat that the husband provided, after the wife had turned it into dry meat or pemmican, belonged to the wife. But the Blackfoot society was structured around the family unit, and if a Blackfoot woman started to get uppity with her spouse, she darn well better have some relatives she could depend on for support.

595 White women generally shudder at the thought of polygamous
[461] marriage, but the Blackfoot ladies rather enjoyed the idea. There was considerable labor involved in tanning hides, building a new

lodge, making moccasins and clothing, picking berries, gathering wood, hauling water, preparing food, and taking care of the children, and so far as a Blackfoot woman was concerned, the more wives the merrier. A woman's husband traditionally had first claim on her younger sisters as his additional wives, and if a woman had no younger sisters she frequently shopped around and located her husband's second wife for him. There was less work for her to do this way, and she always had somebody to talk to.

For about an hour this afternoon I just sat and watched the flies flirt with the flypaper. In case the world would like to know, about twice as many flies light on the concave side of the paper as light on the convex side, and about two out of every five flies that light manage to get free again. Maybe I should compile a compendium of my observations. After all, Mr. P. gained immortal fame by revealing that a hungry dog will salivate when it thinks it is going to get fed --a fact which could have been gleaned from any farm boy.

At four o'clock, Jim came in with an immense load of wood, and his return left me free to go to town to check the mail. When I got back, at about six, Jim said that he and Dad had already "lunched around," so I opened a can of vegetable soup and made a jam and peanut butter sandwich. I brought the Chief several large cans of pineapple juice and a couple of pounds of white seedless grapes. I think he needs more of this kind of food. He ate some of the grapes and went immediately to bed. While I was taking off his moccasins, it occurred to me that he has been wearing the same sox for more than a week--and God knows his feet have not touched water--but the wool sox smell as fresh as the day I first put them on his feet. I hate to imagine what my sox would be like after a week of constant wear. I have never yet encountered an Indian with an unpleasant body odor, and I credit this in part to the fact that Indians are total strangers to nervous perspiration--they *never* become flustered, no matter what the situation. Well, hardly ever.

After the Chief retired, I imitated Jimmy's effort of several days ago and baked two pies--just to see whether I could do it. One was cherry and the other blueberry. We ate the cherry one as soon as it was finished, and it was not too bad for a first effort. During our postprandial discussion, Jimmy let slip the fate of the leather jacket and the tooled pistol holster that I gave him during my last visit. The Blackfoots have something called a "give-away dance," during which they vie with one another in seeing who can give away the most (just take a typical *White Christmas*, turn the whole thing around backward, and you come up with the general idea). I never

539 of the Blackfoots and the chiefs of the Snake Persons would
648 meet at the Big River. [The Chief used the term, *Ó-mach-k'tai:*
[103] Big River, and since this is the Blackfoot name for the Missouri River, I believe that the reference was to the Missouri and not to the body of water located west of the Rockies which is today known as Big River.] When they met in the water of the *Ó-mach-k'tai*, the chiefs of the two nations would count coup by
[555] touching each other lightly with their lances. Each time they touched one another they would shout their coups back to their own camps, and that night each camp would have a victory celebration as though there had been a real battle instead of just a friendly ceremony. The next day, the two nations would exchange gifts, and then each would go its separate way, singing.

539 It was customary in those days that when the Blackfoots had
[291] a dance each girl should dress in the manner of her husband or sweetheart; in this way, everybody could tell whose woman
[554] she was. The men displayed their war honors by decorating their belongings with the white winter skin of the weasel [the
[825] Blackfoots believed the weasel to be the most courageous of
[301] all wild animals], and by wearing in their hair the feathers of the hawk and of the eagle. But since it was not proper for a woman to wear feathers, the Blackfoot ladies attended the dances with their hair decorated instead with braids of *ah-pu-tú-yis* [white grass].

There was at this time among the Blackfoots a young man known as Ah-pi-koh-koh-mi-nim-mah: Round Scabby Robe. Round Scabby Robe was pretty much the camp buffoon; he was not a good hunter, he had no war honors, and his only robe was a scabby old hide which he had cut into the shape of a circle. Round Scabby Robe was too poor to take a wife, but he was secretly in love with the youngest wife—the "far-away" wife—of the head chief, and she in turn was in love with Round Scabby Robe.

595 [Although a Blackfoot man—especially if he were a chief—
539 might have several wives, his various spouses were not considered to share positions of equal privilege in his lodge. A definite hierarchy of both social prestige and household authority existed among the good ladies, top dog being the "sits-by-him," wife (so called because she was the one who sat nearest her husband at social and religious functions). Next in line was the "takes-care-of-him" wife, and so on down the ladder until

we reach the poor gal who was required to perform the meanest labors of teepeekeeping and who was obliged to sleep next to the door and who for obvious reasons was known as the "far-away" wife. The far-away wife almost invariably was the baby sister of one (or more) of the other wives. Frequently she was a mere child and a wife in name only—more of a ward, really—and she was available for marriage to any young chap who could cough up the right price. If our friend Round Scabby Robe had had the hots for one of the head chief's top echelon wives, he would have been in hot water; however, as we shall see, his romance with the young far-away wife had a happy ending.] 595 539

No one in the camp was aware of the love between Round Scabby Robe and the chief's far-away wife until one night at a dance the girl appeared dressed in the manner of her lover. All the people began to gossip then, and when Round Scabby Robe saw his sweetheart dressed in a scabby old robe, with no braids of *ah-pu-tá-yis* in her hair, he felt so ashamed that he asked his partner to go with him down to Bull River, where the beaver lodges are. Then he told his partner good-bye and said that he was going to pass the winter in the lodges of the Beaver Persons. 539

When Round Scabby Robe entered the lodge of the Chief Beaver, the Chief Beaver, who is Chief of all the Underwater Persons, asked him why he had come there. He said that he had come to spend the seven moons of winter with the Beaver Persons, so the Chief Beaver made him welcome. 539 825

The Chief of the Beaver Persons gave Round Scabby Robe a shell formed like a plate. The shell contained seven berries, and the Chief Beaver said to eat the berries. So Round Scabby Robe ate the seven berries, and immediately there appeared upon the shell seven more berries. Each time the seven berries were consumed, seven more appeared.

Then the Chief Beaver gave Round Scabby Robe a drink of water in a large shell shaped like a drinking horn, but each time that Round Scabby Robe drained the shell of water it was immediately filled once again to the brim.

Then the Chief Beaver said, "You cannot eat all the berries because they represent the savis berries which grow all along the banks of the river, and there is no end of the savis berries. And you cannot drink all the water because it represents the water in this river, and the water flows unceasingly."

55: Fisher E-5 (1962-1963) 1983 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

175 buffalo herds went to the Blackfoot because the other con-
105 testants: the Kutenai, Flathead, Pend d'Oreille, and Snake had insufficient firearms. As a result of these successes the Blackfoot moved in a southwesterly direction, eventually extending their territory throughout southern Alberta; from the Cypress Hills in Saskatchewan to the Rockies, and from the North Saskatchewan River to the Mussel-shell River in Montana. At the height of their power they were capable of disrupting the fur trade in Montana while continuing to harass the Hudson's Bay Company in its attempts to solidify trade relations with the western Indians mentioned above.

From 1800 on, explorers, fur traders, and missionaries began to frequent the area and describe for us the Blackfoot version of what has come to be called the True Plains cul-
[177] ture.[15] The base line for this culture was the Blackfoot exploitation of the fur trade and fur trader for guns, liquor
[575] and luxury goods.[16] Despite frequent outbreaks of disease,
[556] competition for social status increased as did wealth and status differentials and the concommitant polygyny.[17] At the same time some of the traditional controls in raiding, warfare, and civil administration appeared to break down. The increased supply of guns and horses seemed to lead to increased individualism, and this individualism brought about an even more aggressive exploitation of their major resource, the buffalo.[18] One might see the first half of the nineteenth

175 612 555 which only wounded him in the neck, for which the bear chased him, and slightly tore one of his thighs. The first poor fellow was still alive and knew his parents, in whose arms he expired. The bear, for the mischief he had done was condemned to be burnt to ashes, the long claws of his fore paws, very sharp and long, the young man wanted for a collar but it was not granted; those who burned the bear watched until nothing but ashes remained.[21]

175 555 Here the young Peigan face danger to obtain the valuable claws and coat of the "grizled bear." Because of this two of them are killed. These unfortunate circumstances do not forestall the third young man from asking for the decorative claws and coat of the Bear. This request would indicate that the persons involved were actively and independently [626] striving for socio-economic rewards. The fact that "those who burned the bear watched until nothing but ashes remained" would indicate a concomitant laxness or flexibility of social controls.

626 175 595 This laxity is also conveyed by other statements from Thompson wherein he notes that the young men would challenge the respected elders in the matter of procuring wives. As noted in Chapter I, the Blood-Blackfoot were polygynous during the period of classic Plains culture.[1A] Older men would marry a number of women, much to the distress of the younger men. However, Thompson says, "Every year there are some 626 175 runaway matches between the young men and women."[22] The young men of this era were not averse to challenging authority [181] A. [See Category 595, p. 16--Analyst]

175 antecedents of frequent I.A.I. concerns--experience and
181 knowledge and money. Here they imply recognition and the
[626] presence or absence of shame; a condition which may be an-
[861] ticipated by ridicule and shame for misbehavior as a child.
175 Shame also applied to the opposite proposition, to when
626 Mr. Schultz went to war to protect himself and his Indian
555 friends.

> I went home and told Hat-ah'-ki the news, removed the cover of my rifle, and filled my coat pocket with cartridges. "Wait," she said, "What are you going to do?" "Why Big Lake told us to meet at his lodge," I explained. "He has some good plan, I suppose." "Yes, he is wise," she agreed, "but you are not going out to be killed by a war party. Stay here with me."
>
> "But our horses. I cannot remain here in the lodge and let the enemy run them off."
>
> "They do not matter. Let them go."
>
> "But," I said, "if I remain here, think what the people would say. They would call me a coward, they would say to you: 'Your white man has a woman's heart: why don't you make some dresses for him?'" That ended the argument.46

In this case it is incumbent upon Schultz to approximate the Blood-Blackfoot ideal. If he does not then his life would be shameful. "Think what the people would say," [178] he says. In this fashion the pieces of the past fall together and roughly begin to match the pattern of the pres-
626 ent. Shame relates to both what a man is and what he does.
595 Shame also relates to male-female relations.
175
273

> I knew a man who always became very mischievous when he drank. He had three wives and at such times he

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would steal their little stores of fine pemican, fancy bead-work, their needles and their awls, and give them to other women. He was up to his pranks one morning as I happed along, and the women determined to catch him and bind him until he became sober. But he would not be caught; they chased him through the camp, out toward the hills, by the river, back to the camp, when, by means of a travois leaning against it, he climbed to the top of his lodge, seated himself in the V-shaped crotch of the lodge poles, and jibed the women for their poor running qualities, enumerated the articles he had stolen from them, and so on. He was exceedingly hilarious. The wives held a whispered consultation, one of them went inside. Their tormentor ceased jibing and began a drinking song:

"Bear Chief, he gave me a drink,
Bear Chief, he gave me a . . ."

That was as far as he got. The wife had thrown a huge armful of rye grass from her couch upon the smouldering fire, it blazed up with a sudden roar and burst of flame which reached the tenderest part of his anatomy: he gave a loud yell of surprise and pain and leaped from his perch. When he struck the ground the women were upon him and I know not how many lariats they coiled around him before they bore him inside, amid the jeers and jests of a throng of laughing spectators, and laid him upon his couch.[47]

Schultz' narration portrays a male-female interaction amid jibes, jests, and jeers. It also mentions activeness and physical agility, so important to the Blackfoot-speaking people. Further, it is an example of the results of looking foolish, and foolishness brought on by drinking.

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[562]

Relating this episode to the contemporary data delineates further parallel: the male is brought inside to sober up and to halt his foolishness. Parenthetically, it might be remarked here that this story identifies shame with male-female role contrasts, with changing role relation

Many of the men have six or eight wives, whom they are very ready to give up to the Whites; even very young little girls are offered. On the other hand, they generally punish infidelity in their wives very severely, cutting off their noses in such cases; and we saw, about Fort Mc Kenzie, a great many of these poor creatures, horribly disfigured. When ten or twelve tents were together, we were sure to see six or seven women mutilated in this manner. The woman whose nose is cut off, is immediately repudiated by her husband; nobody will take her as his wife; and such women generally work for their subsistence in other tents; attend on the children, tan hides, or perform other household work. There have been frequent instances of a husband immediately killing his wife when she has had intercourse with others; often he avenges himself on the paramour, takes away his horse or other valuable property, to which the latter must submit quietly.

[*The actual mutilation was often inflicted by members of the husband's band or union:*

If a woman, whose husband is in one of the unions, has had any intercourse with another, the union meets in one of the tents where they smoke and, in the evening, when all around are buried in sleep, they penetrate into the woman's tent, drag her out, ill-treat her as they please, and cut off her nose. The husband cannot make any opposition; he must repudiate such a woman.]

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Mr. Mitchell thought now of building a new fort, for which he endeavoured to choose the most suitable situation. We rode out for this purpose, ascended the chain of hills behind the fort, where the little prairie dogs retreated into their burrows, and then perceived two armed Indians, who, as soon as they observed us, turned their horses, and galloped up to us. They had not noticed our double-barrelled guns, and doubtless came up to frighten us, and to try their fortune with us; for, as soon as they came near, and saw our arms, they turned round and trotted away.

We had scarcely set out on our return to the fort, and reached the shady spot on the bank, when Dauphin, one of our people, came galloping on an Indian horse, quite out of breath, and told Mr. Mitchell that Ninoch-Kiaiu desired to